

**PICTURE BOOKS AND IMMIGRATION CHALLENGES: AN INTERROGATION OF  
LITERARY CONTENT BASED ON A CASE STUDY OF THREE ADULT  
IMMIGRANTS RECALLING CHILDHOOD TRANSITIONS TO CANADA**

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University of Saskatchewan  
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to theoretically conceptualize the ways that a set of contemporary Canadian picture books might assist young immigrants who are learning Canadian culture as well as language. Three adult participants who arrived in Canada between ages nine and eleven were asked to reflect on this earlier transition time through semi-structured interviews that teased out challenges experienced as newcomers. Previous research has conceived picture books as important tools for immigrants, who are English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, to acquire English proficiency. In this thesis, other roles of picture books will be highlighted and examined, indirectly supporting globalization through recommended resources that might serve other children.

The case study research, grounded in social constructivism, incorporates insights from a theoretical framework that involves critical literacy, reader response, and notions of Radical Change, as well as a conceptual framework that connects globalization and picture book resources. To better grasp the ways that picture books can assist young immigrants to integrate into Canadian society socially and culturally, I first investigated patterns and themes in the recollections of challenges that adult participants discussed from their earlier transition time. Utilizing Berg's practice for content analysis, with some of the categories for exploration emerging from the interview data, I examined whether or not these patterns and themes as well as other pre-determined themes relating to Canadian images and content appear in a set of picture books. This closed set was derived from the Summer 2016 reading list recommended by the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). In this way I am offering a model of how particular books might assist young immigrants during a transition to Canada. This research aimed to offer implications that will support picture books utilizers, including children, educators, researchers, and writers, regarding a wide and practical use of picture books for young newcomers to Canada.

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*I dedicate this work to my parents  
for your unconditional love and support*

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Moving from Beijing, China to Canada, I started my Master's Program in the College of Education in the fall of 2014. As an international student at the University of Saskatchewan, I have been through a year-long transition time adjusting to life in Canada, a tough but unique and precious experience. After this transition period, I have formally and informally reflected on that time from different perspectives, linguistically, culturally, and socially. From these reflections, I suggest that linguistic and cultural difficulties influenced negatively my social world. My personal transition experience has made me interested in the transition experiences of other people as they engage with Canadian culture and traditions for the first time. Also, my own transition experience has become a starting point for me to think about how I can improve immigrants' transition experiences, especially immigrants from China, through my Master's degree research.

While exploring concepts related to globalization in my graduate studies' program, I became interested in reading material, and, in particular, picture book material, that supports language learning. I noted that in picture books, illustrations can support both literal and figurative comprehension. When I was young, I read English picture books and comic books to learn English. I still remember particular cultural differences between the English picture books and my real life in China. For example, in China, grass is a very precious thing in parks or along the road, and it is forbidden to step on this commodity. Numerous signs to remind people not to step on grass are evident in China, probably because grass there is fragile and difficult to grow. In contrast, in English books I read about people commonly having picnics on the grass in western countries. The grass from the illustrations seemed to be stronger than the grass in China. This is just one example of the kinds of differences I noted from one reading context to the other. English picture books in my childhood not only were English learning materials, but also connected to literary images of English-speaking people, their culture, and a North-American life style. Through readings, I learned to think about the world beyond China.

In addition to my own personal reading experiences, as a volunteer for four months with a Chinese class for preschool-age students, I found picture books as a means for Chinese born Canadians to not only learn Chinese but to also access Chinese culture and traditions. Perhaps

picture books are also a way for immigrants to develop English language skills and access English culture and traditions, as well.

For these reasons, I drew my attention to picture books as materials for language learning and also as a way to absorb culture. For my Master's Program research, while focusing on immigrants' transition experience, I looked deeply into Canadian picture books, the reading of which can be conceived as a literary method of acclimatization for immigrants and other people who want to understand Canadian society.

In this research, I was particularly interested in the themes that arose from the immigrant experiences of young people as they transitioned to Canada, and I applied these themes as categories when exploring the content of picture books. In this way I was investigating tools to identify whether a set of contemporary Canadian picture books—a common resource for children in schools—reflected immigrant experience.

My research questions, presented more formally on page 14 of this chapter, have allowed me to examine the transition-time challenges recalled by three adults who immigrated to Canada as children. Following my interviews with these participants, I matched patterns and themes from these challenges to a reading list of Canadian picture books drawn from the Summer 2016 Recommendations of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). I have also examined other patterns and themes in this set of picture books related to Canadian images and perspectives.

These research questions were explored in a theoretical framework of social constructivism, also attending to critical literacy theory, different forms of capital, and Radical Change, while addressing a conceptual framework of picture book and globalization.

### **Overview of Picture Books as a Form of Children's Literature**

Children's literature may be conceived as an important tool for children's education, not only promoting language proficiency and literacy ability but also assisting in framing readers' ideology of the world and individual identity (Edwards & Saltman, 2010; Kiefer, 2010). Scholars in the field of children's literature have various understandings about children's literature, unable to fasten upon a common definition. As Weinreich (2007) indicates, it is hard to find a single definition of children's literature, when people may have different and various understandings.

Some scholars argue that children's literature is for children until they reach adolescence, and that this material can involve various forms covering all the topics appropriate for children (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 1999). Some scholars stress that children's literature can be conceived as books designed for children but processed by adults (Kiefer, 2010; Lukens, 2003; Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 1999), which can be interpreted as literature that contains values and information adults believe to be worthy. Imposing adults' values on children is an act criticized by Nodelman (2008), who claims that children's books should be presented from the view of children themselves. Kiefer (2010) reminds us that contemporary children's literature has expanded its horizons into various perspectives on emotional and psychological experiences informing difficult themes, such as despair, sorrow, pain; however, the purports of those themes are usually delivering recovery and hope to readers.

Picture books are books that contain images and narratives conceived as a whole (Kiefer, 2010). In picture books, illustrations providing storyline and informational details are crucial (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 1999). Compared with illustrated books, the important role of pictures in picture books is highlighted by Edwards and Saltman (2010). In picture books, pictures and narratives are integrated together for readers to understand the meaning of the books. In addition, picture books are a significant form of North American children's literature due to their prevalence. Many forms of picture books are popularly accessed by kids, such as "Mother Goose books, alphabet books, counting books, concept books, and wordless books" (Kiefer, 2010, p. 156).

Today, increasing numbers of picture books have been designed to focus on contemporary themes such as globalization, multiculturalism, First Nations characters and themes, and same sex marriage (Edwards & Saltman, 2010). In Radical Change Theory, Dresang (1999) states three fundamental changes in children's literature, where type two and three are changing perspectives and changing boundaries, respectively. Changing perspectives and boundaries implies that new themes and patterns are booming in today's picture books. In addition, significantly new perspectives towards the same topics are emerging. As Dresang (1999) explains, the notion of Radical Change can be a way to examine children's literature in the digital age, allowing a lens for the examination of changes to this literature over time.

### **Visual Literacy**

Picture books deliver meaning through two types of literacy, the text and the images (Serafini, 2010). Neither the text nor the images can be viewed separately while they work together as one entity (Nodelman, 1988). Lukens suggested that “Pictures make the verbal visible and extend the textual meaning” (p. 40). Besides the traditional concept of literacy, which refers to text, understanding of images in picture books is another result of comprehending the stories and the ideas the author and illustrators want to deliver. Especially for immigrant children who are in the stage of emergent English learning, reading images in the book may be a more direct way to understand the topic than simply reading the text.

As power exists in every literacy, we need “[an] ability to analyze the power of the image” (Winch, Johnston, Holliday, Ljungdahl, & March, 2011, p. 407) in picture books. In my analysis of picture books in this study, I also critically examine visual elements to identify Canadian images, patterns, and perspectives. Also, I focus on the multicultural visual literacy in the picture books to investigate whether there are stereotypes of people from different cultural backgrounds in the picture book set.

### **The Power of Reading**

Besides being a way to improve readers’ literacy ability, literature has the power to make people learn and reflect on political and social issues. Manning (2003) supported this idea as reading “is not just a tranquil act of deciphering, but an exposition of the irreducibility of the other as text, as world, as human being” (p. 151). “Words, literature, books, because of their very nature relentlessly challenge the right of those in power, ask unsettling questions, put in doubt our assumptions” (Manguel, 1993, p. xi).

Associated with Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), Canadian picture books have become a powerful tool for use during and after the school day to explore and examine political and social issues (Courtland & Gonzalez, 2013; Hammett, 2013; Johnston & Shariff, 2013; Wiltse, 2013), especially in Aboriginal education (Strong-Wilson & Phipps, 2013; Ward, 2013).

Focusing on pre-service teachers, Hammett (2013) examined usage of picture books in assisting pre-service teachers to have better understanding of concepts related to multiculturalism. “Diverse Canadian picture books can serve as a catalyst to ignite questions that challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about identity, place and family among preservice teachers” (Hammett, 2013, p. 168). Canada is a country with people from various cultural backgrounds. Aboriginal



cultures are an important component of the larger Canadian culture and have a significant place in Canadian history. Picture books are a means to “experience and appreciate similarity and difference (Hammett, 2013, p. 170), which help pre-service teachers to appreciate diversity and to facilitate supportive ideas to their classroom. Johnston and Shariff (2013) also conducted their research with pre-service teachers. The picture books utilized in Johnston and Shariff’s (2013) work had the power to make the pre-service teachers critically re-think their Canadian identity, their own subjective position and the concept of diversity. By creating space of difference, picture books provided opportunities to readers to “learn[...] from” (Johnston & Shariff, 2013, p. 54) the knowledge. Here, “learning from knowledge” (Johnston & Shariff, 2013, p. 54) begins with readers’ self-transformation towards acquiring new learning.

However, as Strong-Wilson & Phipps (2013) reported, many predominantly white middle-class students in education have difficulties teaching Indigenous cultural knowledge. Their study supported education students, through the reading of picture books, to get engaged with Indigenous literature and cultures. Examples of typical stereotypes of Indigenous cultures were provided to study participants for helping them develop critical thinking. A key outcome of this study involved the participants’ development of cultural awareness lesson plans.

Also conducting research by focusing on teacher candidates, Courtland and Gonzalez (2013) examined lesson plans for multiculturalism, diversity, and social justice. The teacher candidates in the research selected a wide range of picture books to support their teaching on the themes “Aboriginal life; culture, immigration, citizenship and Canadian identity; and social, political, and economic issues” (Courtland & Gonzalez, 2013, p. 112). Here, picture books are greatly recognized as a powerful tool in promoting social justice. Ward’s (2013) study offers similar results, where picture books are applied to “open up conversations and engage young students” (p. 79) in Aboriginal perspectives. For the pre-service teachers in the study, picture books are considered as a “safe” way to start their path in teaching Aboriginal education.

Utilizing historical picture books in teacher education programs, where most of the teacher candidates are of European ancestry, Wiltse’s (2013) research also shows the power of reading. Teacher candidates found ways to deliver the tough topics on Canadian history through the use of picture books. By applying these books to the Canadian history curriculum, teacher

candidates in the study engaged elementary students with Canadian multiculturalism and related issues.

As stated above, the power of reading is not only limited to literacy acquisition, but also pertains to engagement as readers are drawn into critical thinking about cultures, histories, and personal identities. In my study, empowered by reading, immigrant children readers can theoretically challenge their previous national identity and fit it into their new home. In this way, immigrant transition times may be less difficult.

### **Overview of Globalization as a Modern Trend**

Today, Canada is conceived as positive country towards immigrants and refugees (Hastedt, 2016; Joshee, Peek, Thompson, Chareka & Sears, 2016; Li, 2003). Data from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) show that 45, 316 immigrants from birth to age fourteen became Canadian permanent residents in 2015. Of these immigrants, many were children transitioning into a new language and culture.

As picture books are a common way for children learning English as a Second Language (ESL) to improve their language skills (Appelt, 1985; Early, 1991; Hu & Commeyras, 2008), we can consider that exposure to these books may occur both at school and at home. Children are introduced to the ideologies delivered by picture books alongside English. Picture books thus act not only as a tool for studying English, but also as a way for immigrants to gain a better understanding of Canada.

As I considered possible connections between globalization and Canadian picture books, I began to have conversations with people whose experiences I thought might be intriguing to pursue as part of a research project. These conversations assisted me in conceiving a study that would examine the reflections of adults in their early twenties about a time period 10-15 years prior when immigration occurred.

### **Personal Transition Experience**

When I first arrived in Canada, I felt confident about the coming life in a new country. I had already completed elaborate research about Canadian culture as well as studied the history of Saskatoon, where I was going to spend several years to accomplish my Master's degree. For over a year I had also prepared myself for the academic English that would be necessary and I had achieved a "good user" level (band 7) on an Academic English test, International English

Language Testing System (IELTS). At that time, I knew my English was not perfect, however, compared to many other Chinese people's English level, I trusted my English ability even after I initially arrived in Canada. In addition to language, I also thought I was well packed with multicultural knowledge. As one of my majors in my undergraduate study was English, I had taken several classes related to the cultures of English-speaking countries. Although Canada was not the country of specific focus in the class, I did learn some factual information about Canada, in terms of geology, culture, and religion. Besides this learning from class, I also watched a large number of television dramas, for example, *Grey's Anatomy* and *Modern Family*, to get an idea of "real" western cultures and people's life in the west. After I received my admission letter for the University of Saskatchewan, I searched online about weather, people's tourism experience and other students' life in Saskatoon.

These preparations, I believed, would support me to fully integrate into the new society. Before arriving in Canada, I was confident and optimistic towards my future life in Canada. I thought naively that student life in my Master's program would be perfectly smooth, full of friends from diverse backgrounds, leading to significant improvement of my English, during a time when I would consistently enjoy the beautiful nature of the surrounding area as well as busy university life.

Everything was different from my expectations shortly after I landed in Saskatoon. Settling down in my rented room in a townhouse, 20-minute bus distance from campus, I started my new life in Canada. Having classes two days a week, all evening classes, I tried my best to participate in daytime social activities, such as library workshops in various academic fields, and social events held by the Graduate Students' Association. I hoped to make friends with people I met from different activities; however, I did not know how I should start a conversation with others. Even when someone else talked to me first, I could not find appropriate topics to bring to the conversation. In my classes, most of the Master's students were elementary or high school teachers in the 30s to 50s age range. They had many common topics to talk about with each other, such as working in school, family, and children. However, I could not find anything to share.

Besides the language barriers, which caused me difficulty in expressing myself, I was not sure what I could ask of others or which topics people usually apply to casual chatting. This

experience was very different from my expectations. For this reason, I felt upset and exhausted from trying to integrate into the social network with other students. With taking more classes in my program, I increased my knowledge about local culture, such as background of school districts, and differences in teaching content between Canada and China. Eventually, as I participated in badminton on campus every week, I had something in common to talk about with other players.

Communication skills are something I have increasingly learned through observation. For example, people prefer that you say your aims at the beginning of the conversation, in a straightforward manner, instead of listing the reasons for these aims. Beginning with this starting point in the badminton context, I began to have more and more communications with people from various cultural backgrounds.

English was definitely an obstacle for me at the beginning when I started my life in Saskatoon. Although I knew my English was not good in casual communication, I still had the belief that I could improve my English to a very fluent level very soon. Surprisingly, I had difficulties with English usage, which I had never thought about before. For example, when communicating with sales assistants in stores or coffee shops, I did not know the colloquial language for ordering a drink. I did not know “to go” means take-away. Also, since I spent most of the time by myself or staying with other Chinese friends, I did not have many opportunities to speak English with local people. This was opposite to my previous expectations of English improvement.

As time went on, I began trying to improve my English during my classes, as I did not have many social opportunities. I attended two free classes from the Department of Graduate Studies and Research. Also, I got a bursary to take one writing class from the English as a Second Language (ESL) centre in my university. These classes gave me more exposure to English and opportunities to talk with people in English. In addition to real improvement in English, another benefit from taking these three classes was increased confidence in my English.

The previous paragraphs contain a glance at my own transition experience. Looking back to this time, I would not say I enjoyed it; however, I appreciate this experience in my life, which has built many skills and strategies that will remain lifelong. With my personal experience, I started to get interested in other people’s transition experience, especially young immigrants.

Towards the end of my first year in Canada, I started to volunteer as a teaching assistant in an after-school Chinese class and eventually began to teach grade-one students Chinese. I found children in this age group have certain topics they like to talk about, such as cartoons, classes, classmates, and playground games. The topics can be conceived as cultural information shared by kids around grade one and two in public schools. Kids raised in different places or countries have different cultural cognition and storage (Winerman, 2006). As they grow up, children develop increasingly sophisticated underpinnings for their social networks, based on cultural understandings. Older migrant kids, who are around 9 to 11 years old, might have a more difficult time integrating into the new school environment, where kids already have in depth common cultural knowledge (Lee & Chen, 2000). Obviously, kids from China may face some challenges with English language use. It may thus take them a large amount of time to integrate into school contexts.

Picture books have been listed as supportive materials for ESL students in Canada to learn English in ESL classes (Collins, 2005; Early, 1991; Hadaway & Mundy, 1999; Hadaway & Young, 2009; Hu & Commeyras, 2008). In my research, I examined whether picture book information matches themes derived from adults who recollected their immigration time in middle elementary school. In addition to my key research questions, I was interested in whether picture books deliver information related to multicultural knowledge, Canadian ideologies, and attitudes towards immigrant children, as well as those of local Canadian students, and I anticipated that such patterns and themes might emerge from my reading of a set of books. The books were chosen from the reading list of the Summer 2016 Recommendations from the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI).

To ground my ideas, I talked to several immigrants about their transition experiences and whether or not picture books were influential at the time of their move to Canada. These casual conversations became important as I further developed my ideas for reviewing the literature and establishing my research methodology, presented in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis.

### **Conversations**

As a preliminary activity before developing my study, I had three casual conversations with three different immigrants about picture books. The first conversation was with my friend, who, when he was about ten years old, immigrated with his parents to Saskatoon, Canada. His

experience in reading picture books happened in the first two years of settling to Canada. While experiencing English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in a local elementary school, he was required by the ESL teacher to independently read picture books at home, and to retell the stories to the teacher. The second conversation I had was with a young man whom I met during recreational badminton practice at the university. He came to Toronto, Canada as an immigrant with his mother when he was ten years old. After arriving in Toronto, he borrowed and read picture books from the public library, accompanied there by his mother, who was an English professor in a University in China. Before beginning grade five in elementary school, he had finished about 50 picture books. The third conversation happened when I was buying lunch in the university's food court. I learned that the owner of the restaurant immigrated with his wife and three children to Saskatoon four years ago. He shared with me about the experience of his first daughter reading picture books. She was eight years old at the time they arrived in Canada, and utilized picture books for learning English in the ESL classes.

Within all three conversations, I found reflections on the influence of picture books in terms of academics, rather than social or cultural influences. Although the exact memory of specific themes and patterns in the picture books was hard for these adults to recall, one of these acquaintances remembered that he had read several books related to morality themes, such as not telling lies.

Interestingly, none of the three interlocutors personally mentioned the cultural influences from picture books, which can be interpreted in many ways. These people might not have been aware of the cultural influences, or the picture book topics, their texts or the illustrations. With aspects of Radical Change sneaking into today's picture books, I wondered whether contemporary picture books do a different job as compared to earlier publications.

From my informal conversations and considerations of my own English language learning, as well as research in the field (Collins, 2005; Early, 1991; Hadaway & Mundy, 1999; Hadaway & Young, 2009; Hu & Commeyras, 2008), it appeared that young immigrants utilize picture books as an accessible way to improve English proficiency, mainly conscious of improvements in their vocabularies and communicational English. Questions remained unanswered, however, about influences of picture books beyond language learning.

It is my hope that my case study research with participants who have moved forward from this transition time period may shed light on further influences of picture books of which children themselves might not be aware, which is the reason why I considered older participants who were asked to look back on previous immigration transition times to Canada.

### **Key Research Questions**

These introductory conversations led me to think about my key research questions which were:

1. What are the transition-time challenges recalled by three adults who immigrated to Canada during grades 4-6?
2. What patterns and themes parallel to the challenges recalled by these participants appear in the reading list set by authors who are Canadian residents (Summer 2016 Recommendations from SCBWI)?
3. What other patterns and themes related to Canadian images and perspectives appear in this set of picture books?

### **Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this research was to examine the ways that picture books might support children who are newcomers to Canada, during their transition time, to integrate into Canadian society, besides assisting in linguistic improvement. As Hadaway and Mundy (1999) state in their research, positive results occur when utilizing picture books in a secondary English as Second Language (ESL) classroom for English learning. However, I wondered whether another main function of picture books is overlooked by teachers, parents, writers and even readers, which is that picture books may deliver certain ideologies, such as multicultural information, Aboriginal cultural knowledge, and Canadian national ideologies, to new immigrants, besides improving their English proficiency. Perhaps picture books can assist integration into Canadian society not only linguistically but socially as well. In addition, since the majority of picture book readers may be local Canadian students, some of the alternate cultural ideologies can also help immigrant children to better integrate into local contexts through multicultural awareness of the dominant group. Drawing on Vygotsky's suggested learning framework, later termed social constructivism (1978, 1986), as well as the theory of critical literacy (Freire, 1983, 1991, 1998), and Dresang's (1999) notion of Radical Change, I have analyzed a set of Canadian picture books

through the application of a framework developed through interviews with Canadian immigrants recalling their transition time to Canada. As there is little research examining the social and emotional role of picture books for the integration of young immigrants to Canada, this research provides an important social perspective on this topic in a Canadian context.

### **Implications of the Research**

The implications of this research involve support for people who utilize picture books, such as young immigrant readers, teachers in ESL classes, parents of immigrant children, and people who study picture books, including university researchers working in English as a Second Language contexts and children's literature, as well as individuals who write picture books and draw illustrations. For the utilizers of picture books, this study provides an original view connecting picture book ideologies with the successful integration of young immigrants into Canadian society. In terms of a future utilization of picture books, I am hoping to encourage teachers and parents to go beyond a simple focus on English language acquisition and literacy through the application of children's literature resources, and also to pay attention to the messages delivered through picture books in both text and images. For researchers in the field of education and children's literature, this research can bring a new angle of connecting picture books and globalization, encouraging further studies that focus on Canadian ideologies and new immigrants. The perspective this study highlighted is the significance of cultural and social aspects of picture books in their utilizations towards integration of immigrant children Canada, which needs further exploration. Implications for picture book authors may stress overlooked ideologies relating to multiple perspectives such as national image, multicultural views, and Aboriginal knowledges and worldview. As globalization is an irreversible trend, contemporary Canadian picture books as crucial reading materials have to consider their variety of audience, including young immigrant readers. In this case, this study encourages picture book authors and illustrators to pay attention not only to the main story line but also to all tiny details in the creation of picture books.

### **Summary**

With strong interests in picture books and many experiences with utilizing picture books in classrooms, I examined the themes of picture books in support of immigrant children from Mainland China to get through difficulties during their immigrant transition time. As I went



through my personal transition time in Canada two years ago, I have a great willingness to relieve the hardship that immigrant children face in their immigrant transition period. The set of picture books in this research was explored through cultural and social perspectives, other than its linguistic role. Equipped with the theory of social constructivism and conceptual frameworks of picture books and globalization, in this thesis I have explored how a set of Canadian contemporary picture books may influence young readers through themes related to immigrant challenges. My examination of these books both in textual and visual information, based on criteria evolving from case study interviews with three immigrants, may provide a template for further evaluation of literature for young people in light of immigrant transition challenges.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Social Constructivism Theory**

Social Constructivism Theory emerged from the work of Vygotsky (1978; 1986), although the literal name of the theory was initially “Socio-Historical Theory of Cognitive Development” (Dixon-Krauss, 1996). Vygotsky’s (1978; 1986) work highlights the understanding that children’s knowledge is greatly affected by social interaction with the world (Woolfolk, 1997). The idea of social constructivism implies that children’s learning is fully influenced by every aspect of their social exchange in the learning context.

In terms of literacy, Auerbach (1993) claimed that literacy is not neutral and independent from social context; in contrast, it varies in different “contexts, content, purposes, and participants” (Neuman, Celano, & Fischer, 1996). Accessing literacy, readers are not only acquiring a technique in linguistics, but also are learning through social interaction within the cultural contexts in the literacy world (Lytle & Schultz, 1990).

In Canadian picture books, it has been suggested that Canadian culture is conveyed through pictures and words, which are constructed by adults (Edwards & Saltman, 2010; Jin, 2015). Immigrant children can consciously and unconsciously absorb and integrate these ideologies through reading picture books, which, according to Edwards and Saltman (2010), are targets of an ongoing discussion on how such books embed “[c]omplex and contested ideas about nation, community, and the importance of cultural identity” (p. 11). Based on Vygotsky’s Social Constructivism Theory, I considered reading Canadian picture books as an introduction for immigrant children to Canadian social and cultural environments.

#### **Critical Literacy Theory**

Critical literacy is a theory that advocates examining literature from a political perspective, using literacy education as a way to empower the less-powerful in order to overcome social oppression. Developments related to critical literacy theory have thus foregrounded the power of literacy learning (Bloome & Talwalker, 1997). According to Bloome and Talwalker (1997), critical perspective can be promoted in literacy learning, with a focus on criticizing how literature has highlighted certain cultural and social ideologies, while marginalizing minority cultures.

Four dimensions have been listed as fundamental in terms of a critical literacy approach, including “disrupting the commonplace, interrogating multiple viewpoints, focusing on socio-political issues, and taking action and promoting social justice” (Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002). Tracey and Morrow (2006) state that “*Critical Literacy Theory* considers the political aspects of literacy education such as the ways in which schooling reinforces persistent inequalities in contemporary society and the opportunities that exist within education to empower individuals to overcome such social oppression” (pp.113-114). Critical literacy holds that education is not a politically neutral process, nor does education support all children equally (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). As such, the introduction of critical literacy may serve to enhance equity and increase awareness of social and political forces.

Critical literacy theory has origins in Freire’s (1983) critical pedagogy, appearing in the work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Literacy practices thus may reflect social relations of authority and control (Lankshear & Lawler, 1987). As power in literacy contexts can be “identified, transmitted, and possessed” (Luke, 1996, p. 132), a critical literacy approach is to “help the learner develop a critical awareness that texts represent particular points of view while often silencing others” (Ciaradiello, 2004, p. 138). In other words, critical literacy is to question privilege and injustice. Green (2001) states that the critical literacy framework aims to stress and promote liberation and equality in literacy education.

Edwards and Saltman (2010) argue that perspectives on national and cultural identity are embedded in any national literature. For this reason, particularly, Canadian cultural identities may be found in the picture books from the list of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SWBCI), which are created by Canadians. For immigrants, children’s literature could be an important means to discover and absorb national ideologies as well as cultural identities. Applying critical literacy theory to studies of picture books may help to critically understand the ideologies within the books.

### **Radical Change**

Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) is a notion interpreted here as another theoretical framework, utilized in my analysis of the targeted picture books in this study. Dresang (1999) defines Radical Change as a fundamental shift in forms and formats, perspectives, and boundaries related to children’s literature in the digital age. Radical Change thus becomes a

theory for “understanding, appreciating, and evaluating” (Pantaleo, 2004, p. 178) today’s changes in children’s literature, which implies that Radical Change is a means to explore the new reading experience related to contemporary picture books (Dresang & Kotrla, 2009). This study targets the picture books through which to examine literary evolution.

The first type of Radical Change, changing forms and formats, includes “graphics in new forms and formats, words and pictures reaching new levels of synergy, nonlinear and nonsequential organization and format, and multiple layers of meaning” (Dresang, 1999, p. 19). Changing perspectives involves “multiple perspectives, visual and verbal, previously unheard voices, and youth who speak for themselves” (Dresang, 1999, p. 24). Changing boundaries consists of “subjects previously forbidden, settings previously overlooked, characters portrayed in new complex ways, new types of communities, [and] unresolved endings” (Dresang, 1999, p. 26). As picture books in the list of SWBCI-collected titles include many characteristics of Radical Change, this framework was an appropriate lens through which to examine the books for a better understanding of patterns and themes, and further apply categories related to challenges participants cited as important during their transition time as young immigrants.

### **Different Forms of Capital**

Drawing on Bourdieu’s notion of capital (1984, 1986), the interviewed immigrants’ experiences in their childhood transition time to Canada can be understood and analyzed through the lens of the transformation of different assets that people possess. Bourdieu’s Capital theory (1984, 1986) assisted in illuminating the reasons given by participants for their transition difficulties and other reasons they may have overlooked. People strengthen their social mobility by transforming their different forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Social mobility, as Bourdieu (1984) states, can be perceived as people’s abilities to move in the social system. Such a movement is highly dependent on various types of capital. Capital can be viewed as usable resources and invisible power held by people. From Bourdieu’s perspective, individuals possess different forms of capital, especially three fundamental species: cultural capital; economic capital; and social capital (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986; Swartz, 1997).

In this research, as I focused on the cultural and social difficulties experienced by three participants during their transition to life in Canada, social and cultural capital have been highlighted. Bourdieu (1986) suggests that cultural capital exists in three states: the embodied

state; the objectified state; and the institutionalized state. The embodied form of cultural capital refers to “culture, cultivation, *bildung*” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 244), which is invested personally by time, effort and nurture (Bourdieu, 1986). Embodied capital can be transformed directly into personal Habitus. The concept of Habitus can be interpreted as a generator of behaviours (Bourdieu, 1977).

Institutional capital involves educational credentials or qualifications that people acquire and which can be directly converted from economic capital. Social capital refers to networks with people, which can be interpreted as evidence of education and skills. These concepts are important to understand in the context of this study in considering how the three participants recalled and reflected their difficulties in their immigrant transition time. Also, the concept of cultural capital is a crucial tool to explore how people detect and discuss the reasons for their immigration struggles.

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### **Picture Books**

**Utilization of picture books.** Utilization of picture books occurs in various ways in today’s classroom and home environments, involving both personal and social purposes (Brenna, 2010; Jin, 2015; Marriott, 1991). The role of picture books can involve “personal development and self-understanding by presenting situations and characters with which our own can be compared” (Marriott, 1991, p. 5). Experiences of reading picture books can increase children’s language development (Nespeca & Reeve, 2003) and contribute to children’s social lives (Chen & Wang, 2014; Marriott, 1991). English-narrated picture books are not only used in English speaking countries for the children to gain literacy education, but also in the rest of the world where ESL learners use English picture books as important material for English learning (Lu, 2016; Wu, 2014).

Picture books are not only appropriate reading materials for toddlers and little children, but also very useful learning materials for older students. Kiefer (1995) identifies that older children and young adults enjoy the reading of picture books. Today, as Jin (2015) discusses, award-winning picture books may be considered as a significant tool for multicultural education in North America. Multicultural picture books have long been examined for playing an important role for readers to develop a positive attitude towards diversity and multiculturalism (Bainbridge,

Pantaleo & Ellis, 1999; Wham, Barnhart & Cook, 1996). In this current study, I viewed that picture books, especially related to multicultural topics, are a bridge for local Canadian readers (who are born in Canada) for acquiring knowledge of people from different cultures, as well as a bridge for people who try to integrate into Canadian society by learning local social and cultural information.

**Literacy acquisition.** For native English language speakers, picture books are commonly used as a tool for literacy education (Hillman, 1995; Opitz, 1999). For instance, within Hillman's (1995) seventh-grade language arts' classes, she utilized multicultural picture books for struggling readers to improve their reading and writing skills as well as basic literature knowledge. Another example is Opitz's (1999) exploration of utilizing picture books for beginning readers. He highlighted the importance of integration of cultural heritage within the books in supporting emergent readers in literacy acquisition.

For immigrant children, undoubtedly, one common use of picture books is English as a Second Language (ESL) learning for literacy acquisition (Collins, 2005; Early, 1991; Hadaway & Mundy, 1999; Hadaway & Young, 2009; Hillman, 1995; Hu & Commeyras, 2008; Opitz, 1999). Hadaway and Mundy (1999) focus on the implementation of informational picture books in a high school ESL class, based on "literature-based instruction" (p. 465) and other instructional strategies, with positive results. This research also provides benefits for ESL teachers related to further skills' instruction.

In regard to ESL instruction skills combined with picture books, Early's (1991) study highlights how wordless picture books can improve ESL learners' oral language and literacy ability. In addition, Collins (2005) draws attention to vocabulary acquisition in ESL learning for preschool children, with the help of picture books. Moreover, Hu and Commeyras (2008) stress the aspect of the biliteracy of ESL learners. In their research, investigating the performance of a five-year-old Chinese boy recently arrived in America, the wordless picture book is an important tool for "emergent biliteracy" (p. 1).

In regard to examination of previous picture books in language acquisition for ESL learners, Hadaway and Young (2009) used evaluative criteria on language acquisition to investigate 19 picture books published in the 20 years prior to their study. They discovered that a few picture books were positive examples in helping language learning as well as in

sociocultural adjustments, while most of the examined picture books “took the reader only part of the way through the language acquisition process, failing to represent the lengthy and complex process of language learning” (Hadaway & Young, 2009, p. 175).

Visual literacy is another significant topic related to picture books. Research has been conducted on how illustrations in picture books impact immigrants to better integrate into the new society. For example, Arizpe (2009) conducted research to examine the impact of pictures in picture books on immigrant children in Scotland. She discovered that picture books helped these young participants to make sense of their new culture and identity. Visual images in the picture books not only helped to develop literacy skills, but also served to help children “approach... and understand ... the differences in personal experiences leading the way to sharing values as future citizens of the same country” (Arizpe, 2009, p. 144). This research implies that encouraging immigrant children to have visual experiences with picture books assists them to better conceive the different cultural expectations of the new country.

**Diversity in perspectives in picture books.** Along with diverse perspectives that are more easily found in today’s picture books than before, many research studies focus on examining multicultural perspectives (Bainbridge & Brenna, 2013; Bainbridge, Pantaleo, & Ellis, 1999; Hammett & Bainbridge, 2009; Katz, 2016; Manifold, 1997; Mendoza & Reese, 2001; Pantaleo, 2008; Wham, Barnhart & Cook, 1996; Wiltse, 2015). The importance of picture books with multicultural themes is that they provide opportunities for readers to develop their empathy, and provide knowledge on different cultures (Farris, 1995). In previous research, scholars have examined multicultural aspects of picture books from various perspectives, such as criticizing contemporary multicultural picture books, content analysis on today’s multicultural picture books, utilizing multicultural picture books in classrooms, and exploring preservice teachers’ attitudes about multicultural story books.

Bainbridge and Brenna’s (2013) research aimed to examine the responses from preservice teachers about their attitudes and perspectives towards diverse Canadian picture books. Combined with critical literacy theory, the researchers found preservice teachers transcended their common viewpoints to think and embrace new perspectives, some of which had troubled and embarrassed particular teacher candidates before the research discussion. From the research, participants started to pay attention to multicultural issues in picture books and

many of these teacher candidates planned to include these diverse resources in their future classrooms.

Also examining attitudes of pre-service teachers, Hammett and Bainbridge (2009) conducted qualitative research to explore multicultural education ideologies and practices through implementation of picture books in curriculum design. Starting by interviewing pre-service teachers for cultural identity discovery, Hammett and Bainbridge also examined the multicultural education policy in Newfoundland and Labrador. The researchers found that the educators and the policies in the study needed to change in preparation for changing demographics.

The themes in multicultural education involve a wide range of topics, not only referring to different ethnicities, but also including the difference in age, gender, physical and mental disability (Bainbridge, Pantaleo, & Ellis, 1999; Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2003). In terms of the themes connected to disability, Katz (2016) utilized picture books related to the topic of disability, employing a critical literacy approach in reading, writing, and reflection to help students in elementary education build open attitudes and positive perspectives. Through the lens of social construction, Katz (2016) discovered that accessing picture books is a crucial way for children to develop “acceptance and appreciation for individuals with disability” (p. 26). Within the study’s implications, the researcher also suggested several literacy strategies, such as read-aloud, careful selections of children’s literature, using a visual literacy approach, and providing opportunities in writing.

Combining the notion of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), a key means to examine multicultural perspectives, Pantaleo (2008) analyzed various contemporary picture books and students’ responses. Focusing on students in Grade One and Grade Five, Pantaleo (2008) sought to address how multi-perspectives are conveyed by picture books as an example of Radical Change, as well as how broader social and cultural characteristics are reflected in picture book contexts.

A multicultural perspective in picture books has also been examined in Mendoza and Reese’s (2001) research. The multicultural component appeared to be a significant means for children from various backgrounds to get to know each other. However, Mendoza and Reese also criticized issues and problems in presenting marginalized cultures, offering examples from



particular books with respect to Mexican American perspectives. The researchers advocated that multicultural knowledge and information in the picture books should be accurate and authentic (Mendoza & Reese, 2001), which can help students build critical thinking towards culture and race.

Golos, Mooses, and Wolbers (2012) utilized content analysis of 20 picture books related to themes of disability, and found that illustrations “do not represent deaf characters from a cultural perspective” (p. 239), but in a more pathological way. Another study done by Emmerson, Fu, Lendsay, and Brenna (2014) addressed through content analysis characters with disabilities in North American picture books. Drawing on the theory of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), these researchers found that characters with disabilities are significantly emerging in picture books, in contrast to their previously “unheard voices” (Emmerson et al, 2014, p. 19). This perspective on disabilities can further serve as “mirrors” (Bishop, 1990, p. ix) and “windows” (Bishop, 1990, p. ix) on people in our society who have been marginalized in the past.

Besides many research studies conducted in examining the text part of picture books, Manifold’s (1997) study explored the visual literacy required for picture books, which is related to the illustrations, through the lens of multiculturalism. Visual literacy, as an important strategy applied to picture books, conveys information and ideologies to readers. Manifold (1997) considered how quality of illustrations can play a positive role in the reader’s comprehension of the whole story, especially for the picture books involving multicultural themes. Within her work, pictures in picture books are perceived a powerful tool to teach social empathy, which helps readers learn to better understand “[h]uman [s]imilarities [a]nd [d]ifferences” (Manifold, 1997, p. 30).

Starting with an aim to help students have better understanding of story characters in different cultures, Taliaferro (2009) worked at utilizing picture books to develop adolescents’ imaginations. She found that picture books functioned as a helper for students to develop empathy and cultural understanding towards characters and their context in the literature.

Viewing children’s literature with Aboriginal themes as mirrors and windows on her personal life, Wiltse (2015) reflected on both her teaching and research experiences. Wiltse recalled several Aboriginal picture books that were powerful tools to study Aboriginal issues and

advocated the utilization of a critical multicultural analysis approach to comprehend the complicated sociopolitical context.

Not only are multiculturalism topics in children's literature prevalent in North America, studies examining multicultural picture books in other regions are increasing. In So's (2016) research, early critical literacy is a means to examine multicultural picture books with respect to diverse races and cultures in a South Korean kindergarten context. So (2016) highlights that teachers in early childhood education should create classroom environments that expose students to multicultural literacy, which can help young children develop positive attitudes towards people from various races and cultures.

**Themes and patterns in picture books.** Many scholars have explored common themes in picture books (Lukens, 2003; Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 1999). Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson (1999) defines themes in picture books as "an aesthetic understanding" (p. 30) rather than the more traditional expectation of morality. Classification of the categorization in themes of picture books in Kiefer's (2010) work implies various themes are common in today's picture books, including family stories, familiar everyday experiences, cultural diversity, old people, the child's world of nature, animals, modern folktale style, humor, social and environmental concerns, and war and its aftermath (Kiefer, 2010).

Lukens (2003) states that themes of picture books appear as a central meaning or idea of the whole story. For different readers, themes of picture books can be diversely understood. Lukens (2003) argues that every individual has his or her own special life experiences, which greatly influence each one's personal comprehension of the stories. For this reason, although there are obvious themes in different stories that writers may want to deliver, readers have their own understanding of the main ideas in picture books.

## **Globalization**

**Background of problem: globalization and immigration.** Globalization is also one of the conceptual frameworks in this study. As Roland Robertson (1992) defines the notion, globalization, as "a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole ... both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole" (p. 8). Globalization is also a process with a long history, manifesting itself in diverse ways (James, 2006). Along with globalization, "the constraints of

geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede[;] ... people become increasingly aware that they are receding[;] and ...people act accordingly” (Walters, 2001, p. 5). For this reason, although it is not a harmonious process for various cultures and numerous languages to integrate together, a greatly globalized world will be occupied by a single culture (Walters, 2001). To expand Walter’s (2001) idea, today maintaining multiculturalism is hard in a globalized world. As Canada is recognized as a country welcoming different cultures, immigrants from various places can find their home culture as well as mainstream culture in Canadian society, which assists them to fit into their new home.

In the globalized context, due to today’s increasing international interdependence (Hall, 1991), people migrate and immigrate to other states as a result of various factors: economic (Friman, 2004; Kloosterman & Rath, 2003), work, (Castles & Davidson, 2000; Raghuram; 2004), political (Chimni, 2000; Dauvergne; 2008; Zetter, 2007), and educational (Bae, 2013; Jang 2015; Park & Bae, 2009; Park & Lo, 2012; Shin, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015; Shin & Park, 2015; Yu, 2010).

**Integration into the local society.** In our globalized world, the contraction of the global and the local is being stressed. Politically, citizenship plays an important role both in the global and in the local, which is being emphasized by this context. As Delanty (2000) indicates, citizenship fundamentally consists of four aspects: rights, responsibilities, participation, and identity. For immigrants who spontaneously change their citizenship from one to another, such a shift implies that their identities must also evolve.

According to Anderson (1991), individuals having the same national identities are not necessarily naturally similar; on the contrary, nationalism is a political process. Implied in Anderson’s work is the idea that the national identity is promoted by the nation to people who hold the citizenship, no matter how different they are. For this reason, politically, national identities can be understood as a “cultural product” (Mooney & Evans, 2007, p. 51), which people can change spontaneously. In regards to immigrant experiences, especially the experiences of immigrant children, national identity is a significant achievement towards fully and successfully integrating into the new nation.

**Language acquisition.** Language is a crucial and necessary part of full integration into the local society. Language is closely connected with an individual’s personal and cultural

identity. Danzak (2011) explores how ESL learners combine their immigration experience and personal identity with ESL learning. Offered opportunities to express their immigration stories in graphic narrative style, immigrant students in Danzak's study were encouraged to show their identities through multiliteracies. This research highlights not only graphic self-narrative as a powerful means for ESL teaching, but also the importance of ESL learners' identities, which can greatly influence their language acquisition.

**ESL in Canada.** ESL education is significant in Canada due to the large immigration numbers. Much research has been conducted from various perspectives, such as instructional strategies in ESL class (Haneda, 2006; Horst, White, & Bell, 2010; Janks, 2012; Lau, 2012), culture and identity (Cummins, 2006; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Stuart, 2005), and teacher development (Lau & Stille, 2014).

Within the research of teaching strategies in ESL settings, critical literacy is a key instructional theory in ESL teaching (Haneda, 2006; Janks, 2012; Lau, 2012). In Lau's (2012) study, critical literacy was stressed as an effective means to support learners in ESL settings. In her research, despite the limitation of the new immigrant students' second language proficiency, they could still engage in the critical literacy activities, gaining insights about social and cultural issues.

In addition to critical literacy, Haneda (2006) highlighted the significance of learning literacy outside schools in various other settings, especially at home and in community where literacy exists in diverse languages and forms. Besides acquiring literacy proficiency in different settings, learning through multi forms of literacy was also examined by Cummins (2006). Drawing on the New London Group's (1996) multiliteracies work, Cummins (2006) reflected that in Canadian ESL teaching and learning contexts, technology provides effective tools to involve learners from diverse backgrounds in improving their academic performance.

Horst et al (2010) focused on another perspective of instructional strategy, cross-linguistic awareness. Students' first language can help them to learn the second language. By designing a cross-linguistic awareness package for teachers, second language acquisition can be supported.

In contrast, the monolingual teaching method is common in many ESL classes. Cummins (2006) examined this instructional strategy, finding little evidence supporting that monolingual

teaching is positive for students. In contrast, Cummins (2006) advocated the bilingual instructional method, which is more beneficial to ESL learners.

Another research study related to the perspectives of language, cultural and identity highlights the importance of understanding prejudice in Canadian ESL classes (Stuart, 2005). This study suggested that people understand and honor diversity and multiculturalism in ESL contexts, by promoting more publications and courses coping with prejudice in ESL contexts. In support of this notion, Norton and Toohey (2001) identified how social practice plays an important role for ESL learners to effectively acquire their second language proficiency.

In a teacher development study, Lau and Stille (2014) explored the importance of the collaboration between university-based researchers and school-based teachers, who are strengthened by each other's expertise. This was described as a supportive partnership. The university researcher offered teaching methods that utilize technology and media to promote critical literacy; working alongside, the classroom teacher provided an opportunity for the university researchers to better understand the reality of ESL teaching.

**Transition time period.** Within immigration processes, the transition time period is critically important for successful adaption into the new society. As Merriam (2005) states “Transitions are periods of change in our lives that seem to alternate with periods of stability” (p. 3), and, in the case of immigrants, the time period of immigrating from one country to another belongs to the notion of life's transition. Along with moving to a new place, transition in many aspects, in addition to the explicit physical transition, awaits immigrants. Some immigrants may have to adapt to a new language and culture which are significantly different from their previous ones. This type of transition takes “a new understanding and a new equilibrium” (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004, pp. 326-327) for immigrants.

Vaynshtok (2001) adopted Bridges' (1991) transition model for an analysis of the transition time of the refugee population. In Bridges' (1991) transition model, people usually go through three processes during their transition period. These processes are “the ending”, “neutral zone”, and “the new beginning”, respectively (p. 5). The ending, as described here, refers to the period that refugees have to say goodbye to their previous personal identity, culture, language, etc. In the neutral zone, where the old habits no longer exist and new behaviors have not been created yet, “it is a painful time for refugees when they reexamine and reevaluate their prior life

experiences and question their personal and cultural values, assumptions, and attitudes” (Vaynshtok, 2001, p. 27). In the third phase, the new beginning, refugees can operate with their new identities and values (Vaynshtok, 2001).

Besides the aspect of transition in languages, which I have stated in the above sections, many previous research studies have focused on cultural transitions for immigrants (Baptiste, 1987; Ngo & Li, 2016). Baptiste explored cultural transition in the context of Spanish-heritage immigrant families. He discovered that all the participants in the study went through a sense of loss of their old cultural habits. In addition, family members were not aware that the transition period may be stressful, which later caused family conflicts (Baptiste, 1987). His research implied that immigrants from different cultural background have to experience a difficult and tough cultural transition period. In Ngo and Li’s (2016) research, cultural identities played a crucial role for immigrants in adapting to the new society socioculturally and psychologically during their transition period. Local identity was positively related to social and cultural assimilation, while home country identity had negative impact for sociocultural transition (Ngo & Li, 2016).

### **Summary**

Social constructivism was the main theoretical framework for this study as it contextualized the research proposed. It was also used as a theoretical umbrella for Radical Change, critical literacy, and Bourdieu’s notion of different forms of capital. Picture books themselves thus became a key conceptual framework, within which ideas about globalization contributed to a final integrated product about the immigrant experience and potential picture book connections.

Many research studies have explored picture books used as a means to develop readers’ language and literacy ability (Lu, 2016; Nespeca & Reeve, 2003; Wu, 2014). In addition, functioning as significant materials in social justice and multiculturalism studies, picture books deliver diversity perspectives to readers in classrooms, including students as well as teachers. A large number of recent studies have focused on picture books as a tool in Aboriginal culture education and Aboriginal literature learning (Wiltse, 2015), and understanding towards disability (Emmerson et al., 2014; Golos et al., 2012; Katz, 2016).

Utilizing picture books with particular groups of people, ESL learners, teachers and researchers have found that picture books are a powerful tool in teaching English and literacy acquisition (Collins, 2005; Early, 1991; Hadaway & Mundy, 1999; Hadaway & Young, 2009; Hillman, 1995; Hu & Commeyras, 2008; Opitz, 1999). In addition to helping immigrants integrate into a new country through language and literacy improvement, Arizpe's (2009) work illustrated how immigrants fit into a new culture and identity by drawing from the visual art in picture books.

There has been a lack of exploration of the role of picture books in helping immigrants to get through their transition period in a new world. Prior to this type of research, resources must be evaluated regarding content. My study intends to fill the gap in terms of an investigation of the content in picture books and immigrant transition experience. How do immigrant young readers acquire cultural and social information through reading contemporary Canadian picture books? How do the stories and visual illustrations affect young readers' national identity? These questions can be explored following the results of my study, which specifically looked at a set of books in light of patterns and trends elicited from immigrant experiences.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### **Qualitative Case Study**

The purpose of this study was to develop and apply a picture book evaluation template on the basis of challenges recalled by three participants discussing their immigration transitions to Canadian life. Following the preparation of the template, a set of picture books was analyzed in regards to emerging as well as pre-determined themes, considering cultural and social functions of Canadian picture books especially as they may assist young Canadian immigrants from different countries to overcome difficulties within their immigration transition time.

### **Definition of Case Study Research**

Merriam's (1988) description of qualitative case study design as a good way to examine "critical problems of practice and [to] extend... the knowledge base of various aspects of education" (p. xiii) connected well to my research questions:

1. What are the transition-time challenges recalled by three adults who immigrated to Canada during grades 4-6?
2. What patterns and themes parallel to the challenges recalled by these participants appear in the reading list set by authors who are Canadian residents (Summer 2016 Recommendations from SCBWI)?
3. What other patterns and themes related to Canadian images and perspectives appear in this set of picture books?

A strong match between these research questions and the purposes of qualitative case study assisted the choice of methodology. The study thus presents a lens to examine Canadian children's literature as a multi-dimensional tool in light of increasing the integration of immigrants into Canada.

Generally, case study design refers to a method which can systematically seek information about a particular case; the *case* in case studies can be a person, social context, event, or group (Berg, 2004; McMillan & Schumacher, 1984; Merriam, 1988; Yin 1994). The objectives of case study involve gaining a better understanding of how "the subject operates or functions" (Berg, 2004, p. 251). Merriam (1988) identifies a particular case as "a bounded phenomenon" (p. xiv). In my study, "bounded" (Merriam, 1988, p. xiv) refers to the framework applied through a consideration of participant experiences occurring in childhood.



The case in this study was thus built to frame the recollected experiences of three adult immigrants who arrived in Canada, between ages nine to eleven, and who were considering retrospectively their transition time. By interviewing these three adults, who were within 10-15 years of their immigration date to Canada, to explore their difficulties during transition, I anticipated patterns and themes which could subsequently be applied as criteria for the examination of a set of Canadian picture books. This examination of twenty-four picture books, selected from a list of titles published in recent years and recommended by Canadian authors to the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI), occurred through content analysis (Berg, 2004).

### **Types of Case Study**

Based on different overall intents of the case study, the types of qualitative case study can be divided into descriptive case study (Merriam, 1988), interpretive case study (Merriam, 1988), evaluative case study (Merriam, 1988), oral or life history case study (Lawrenson, 1994, cited in Merriam, p. 40), clinical case studies (Borg & Gall, 1989), action research case study (Stenhouse, 1988), and journalistic case study (Yin, 1994). One type of case study is descriptive case study, also called nonexperimental research, which is designed so that description and explanation of the research questions are sought as the goal of the study in order to examine the phenomenon (Merriam, 1988). Such a definition of descriptive research applied well to the study I have identified here. The phenomenon involved challenges young immigrants may experience during their transition to Canada. Because picture books are also popularly utilized as a helpful resource for new immigrants' learning of English, especially immigrant children, connection between immigrant experiences during the transition time to Canada, and picture books, was drawn into the study design. Qualitative descriptive case study offered me a comprehensive way to illuminate potential applications of picture books with new immigrants offering information, to support ESL instructors, ESL learners, and picture books writers. Corresponding to the purpose of this study, descriptive case studies are "entirely descriptive and move in a theoretical vacuum" (Lijphart, 1971, p. 691), although I anticipated the possibility that new theory might be advanced by my work.

## **Benefits of Case Study**

One of the benefits of case study is that it can provide a great freedom for researchers to discover wide data that will inform the research questions (Berg, 2004). Stake (1995) argues that researchers using case study methodology can be conceived as interpreters. From this perspective, case study design leaves much room for investigators to gain insights towards the topics they seek to explore. In this thesis, the qualitative case study method provided opportunity to apply human experiences to a thematic study of picture books. Merriam (1988) stresses that case study in the field of education is a research method which can offer researchers “discovery, insights, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied” (p. 5). As no previous research has concentrated on applying concepts from immigrant experiences to thematic evaluation of resources, choosing qualitative case study for this study offered me an original lens and significant freedom to explore the additional functions of picture books regarding special minority groups in Canada.

In addition to being descriptive, Merriam (1988) identifies three other characteristics of a qualitative case study, which are “particularistic ... heuristic, and inductive” (p. 11). With qualitative case study design as the research method, I concentrated on my three participants to explore “a rich, ‘thick’ description” (Merriam, 1988, p. 11) of their remembered experiences as immigrants to Canada from mainland China. I then explored the intersection between participants’ stories and the set of picture books. Inductions that occurred from my research data were “generalizations, concepts, or hypotheses” that emerged “from an examination of data—data grounded in the context itself” (Merriam, 1988, p. 13).

## **Procedure**

In this qualitative case study, I first utilized the method of semi-structured interviews to obtain information from three adult participants who immigrated 10-15 years ago from mainland China to Canada when they were between ages nine to eleven. Through analysis of the three participants’ interview data, I concluded a catalogue with different topics to explore in the picture books. With this catalogue of obstacles that the young immigrants experienced as a template to examine the set of picture books, I investigated the Canadian picture books recommended in SCBWI’s summer 2016 reading list, seeking themes and patterns that might assist young immigrants to gain cultural, social, and national ideologies and information about

Canada. Such information may theoretically support a better integration into Canada, and offer implications for further research. Content analysis was a key method of analysis in regards to the interview data as well as the exploration of the picture books.

### **Study Sample of Picture Books**

Researchers may purposefully choose study samples based on the intentions of their study (Chein, 1981; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1980). In this way, a purposive sample can help researchers learn the most about what they want to discover or explore.

I identified 24 picture books from the 2016 summer reading list of SCBWI as a supportive closed set for consideration. A rationale for using this reading list involved the fact that the titles were contemporary Canadian picture books easily accessed in Canada. In addition, the sample itself was recommended by a well-known professional organization, SCBWI, and of a size that was manageable for the analysis involved. Titles for SCBWI's summer reading list are suggested to the organization by members who are writers and/or illustrators, and who use this non-profit group as a support system related to their craft. SCBWI is one of the largest international professional North American organizations for writers and illustrators in children's and young adults' literature (SCBWI, n. d.). The books in the list are "from first time authors/illustrators, award-winners, mid-listers, and best seller list toppers" (Bader, 2016, p. 15). This group of books can thus also be conceived as a "stratified purposeful" sample (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 167), which represents "the distinguishing features of subgroups" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 167) of today's recommended picture books for Canadian readers.

Specifically, the target in my research involved contemporary Canadian picture books in order to examine the content of these picture books through close examination of a closed sample derived from a source other than individual book selection by the researcher. In total, 25 picture books appeared on SCBWI summer reading list for 2016. However, only 24 of them were used in my picture book set, as they are all narrated in English. The one which was not included, *La magie du corps humain* (Audet, Villeneuve, 2015), did not meet the language requirement, as it was a French picture book.

I determined that SCBWI's 2016 summer reading list would offer a good representative sample of titles for the application of the analysis generated by this study, even though the total

number of books was small. I anticipated that the picture books on the recommended 2016 summer reading list represented picture books professionally published in recent years in Canada, however this was a prediction on my part and is subsequently one of the limitations of the study itself.

### **Participants**

In terms of the interview participants, I followed the criterion sampling rule, which is that participants are selected on the basis that “they meet an important, predetermined criterion” (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 170). Similar to the criteria for picture book selection, purposive sampling was a key rule for selecting participants. “Purposive sampling is based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most” (Merriam, 1988, p. 69). This criterion was what tied this study to globalization—all three participants immigrated from China 10-15 years ago between the ages of 9-11. From the semi-structured interview data, I identified what difficulties and challenges these participants in Canada faced in their transition time. Connected to the criterion related to participant background was that all three participants clearly remembered and recalled their transition time, a factor that enhanced the quality of the data from the interview.

Since Chinese immigrants are one of the largest immigrant populations in Canada (CIC, 2016), targeting a sample of Chinese immigrants provided me with a window into a population of particular interest. China is one of the ancient countries in the eastern part of the world, where the languages, cultures, customs, and ethics are significantly different from those in Canada. Choosing three Chinese immigrants as participants led to a better understanding of their difficulties during transition time, possibly related to such differences.

As I sought in-depth responses to the semi-structured interview from participants who had experienced similar social conditions, I did not have to select a large sample (Seidman, 2006). Powerful stories from three participants for this research were enough for me to catalogue challenges these three immigrants faced during their transition time, which I then generalized into categories for literary content analysis.

The selection of my participants began with one of my friends, who is an immigrant from China. This friend arrived in Saskatoon, Canada, when he was ten years old, from a middle-sized city in Northern Mainland China. At the time of the study, he was 24 years old, and graduating

from University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He had been living in Saskatoon, Canada, for about 14 years.

Following the identification of this first participant, given the pseudonym David for the purpose of this study, I used the snowballing sample method (Hays & Singh, 2012) to recruit another two participants who were linked to the first participant through social connections. I passed the Letter of Initial Consent to David for encountering another two interviewees. See Appendix D for the Letter of Initial Consent form.

My second participant, Caroline, met during recreational badminton, was a friend of my first participant. After a brief introduction, I discovered that she met criteria for this study. She had immigrated to live with her father in Canada when she was 11 years old. After staying in Calgary for half of a year, she moved to Regina until her undergraduate study took place at the University of Saskatchewan. At the time of the research study she was a first-year graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan.

The third participant, Rose, was also a friend of the first participant since they had attended the same high school in Saskatoon. I met Rose during recreational badminton, as well. She was a friend of the first participant and some of my other friends, since they all went to the same high school in Saskatoon. At the time of the study, she was a fourth-year student at the University of Saskatchewan. She had arrived in Saskatoon, Canada from southern China, when she was 11.

In summary, the three participants of this study were adult students connected to the University of Saskatchewan. They had arrived in Canada at about the same age, at least 10 years ago, and recollected their transition from life in China. All three participants were friends, and through the context of recreational badminton I became acquainted with them and offered them the opportunity to participate in this study. Following brief oral introductions of this research, they considered and volunteered to assist me with my research through the signing of participant consent forms and data/transcript release forms.

### **Data Collection Strategies**

Case study incorporates a number of data-gathering measures (Berg, 2004; Hamel, Dufour, & Fortin, 1993; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1998), which can include in-depth interview and document analysis (Hagan, 2002; Yin, 1994). In this study, I utilized semi-structured interviews

(Hays & Singh, 2012; Seidman, 2006) for investigations into transition challenges among young immigrants to Canada. Then I employed content analysis (Berg, 2004) for making sense of the interview data as well as interrogating a set of picture books on the basis of information derived from the participant data as well as a consideration of other content emerging from these books.

### **Semi-structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interview (Hays & Singh, 2012; Seidman, 2006) was the first data collection method in this research, through which I collected rich information from the participants. Semi-structured interview refers to “a form of interview that uses a protocol as a guide and starting point for the interview experience” (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 431). Different from structured interview, where the interview questions are all pre-established before the interview takes place, and which is used generally in survey or telephone interviews, the semi-structured interview provides more room for researchers to explore in-depth answers towards the research questions (Creswell, 2002, 2012; Hays & Singh, 2012; Seidman, 2006). Depending on different interviewees, the interview pace and additional questions can be controlled by researchers, which will make the researchers better at achieving their interview goal. Harvesting the perspectives of the participants is intended to bring powerful stories and “a richer picture of a phenomenon” (Hays & Singh, 2012).

See Appendix A for the semi-structured interview template used with the three young Chinese immigrant adults for recalling their experiences in transition time. In terms of the design of the interview questions, I included several types of questions to support a wide gathering of information. These types were: background questions; experience questions; knowledge questions; and opinion questions. First, starting with background questions, I examined all the three participants’ background, regarding their immigration experience, to ensure they all met my criteria of interview participant selection. The second section of questioning, exploration of their immigrant transition time through experience questions, particularly focused on linguistic, cultural, social, and personal challenges and comprised the largest amount of time spent during the interviews. The third section of questioning related to knowledge questions posed to obtain advice from the participants for other newcomers to Canada as well as advice for Canadians on how to treat newcomers. The last section of questioning was discovery of the participants’ opinions of a couple of contemporary Canadian picture books, through opinion questions.

The picture books presented in the interviews were *Wild Eggs: A Tale of Arctic Egg Collecting* (Napayok-Short, Wright, 2015), *Missing Nimama* (Florence, Thisdale, 2015), *The Hockey Sweater* (Carrier, Cohen, 2014), *Ride the Big Machines Across Canada* (Mok, 2015), and *Canadian Jingle Bells* (Townsin, Harrington, 2011). The reasons for choosing these five picture books involved the following: their contents and themes were Canadian, including themes and stories about Aboriginal people and Aboriginal cultures, hockey, Canadian geographic cultures of each province, and Canadian Christmas holidays, related to religion.

The three interviews lasted for 25 minutes, 35 minutes, and 55 minutes, respectively. As individuals had different experiences in their transition time, they had different stories to share in the interviews. Some interviewees had more to share, while some shared less in terms of recollections, or else spoke more succinctly. The length of the interviews did not represent their quality.

One of the important elements of interviewing successfully is active listening, which is part of “real listening” (Adler, Rolls, & Proctor II, 2015, p. 254). Active listening is a listening strategy which assists researchers in obtaining more useful information from their interviews. Within active listening as a strategy in this research study, I used repetition to stress the key point I was interested in to encourage participants to tell me more about their experiences related to transition time. This assisted me in finding more information about difficulties, taking participants into territory they may not have recollected easily. Another key point I followed in my interview was using “illustrative questions” (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 246). When asking questions related to challenges in transition period, which might be too abstract to be recalled, I illustrated potential responses to give some examples that might prompt recollection. This process helped interviewees go back to immerse themselves in experiences occurring years ago.

### **Content Analysis**

Many scholars have defined content analysis in their work. For example, Hays and Singh (2012) state that content analysis is “a process of examining content and themes, typically from written documents” (p. 419). To a broader understanding, Berg (2004) agrees with Holsti (1968) that content analysis can be conceived as “any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages” (p. 608). For this research, the picture books can be viewed as “documents” (Merriam, 1988, p. 69), which are printed materials

related to the case. As Berg (2004) clarifies, such items can include “an entire book, a letter, speech, diary, newspaper, or even an in-depth interview” (p. 274). Written documents have a power to unfold the reflection on a particular and specific phenomenon (Hay & Singh, 2012). “Each book, ..., represents at least one person who is equivalent to the anthropologist’s informant or the sociologist’s interviewee” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 163).

Utilizing content analysis to examine printed documents can achieve a variety of benefits if this inexpensive method (Berg, 2004) uncovers patterns and themes related to national and cultural ideologies present in these books. As well as using a few of the picture books to elicit and deepen responses from participants, I also classified patterns, themes, national and cultural ideologies, from the set of books as a whole, according to the catalogue emerging from the interview data. Then, I reflected upon the connections between the findings in the picture books with the transition time challenges in the reality of these three participants.

### **Data Analysis**

The study was framed through a consideration of data on immigration transition challenges from people who have experienced immigration at a young age, to examine the content of a set of Canadian picture books. Content analysis was used in both interview analysis and picture books analysis. The categories of transition difficulties obtained from the content analysis of interviews became a key tool to examine the picture book sets.

### **Interview Data Analysis**

With regard to interview data analysis, “the essence of content analysis is identifying *substantive* statements – statements that really say something” (Gillham, 2000, 71). The actual analysis of the data occurred in a number of stages. In terms of the interview data, which were collected through audio-taped and transcribed responses, I began jotting field notes during the interviews that reminded me of possible important themes as they were emerging. Following the transcriptions, drawing on Gillham’s (2000) analysis procedure, I performed the steps of interview content analysis. First, I began to read the transcripts of each participant in turn; second, I highlighted important sections of the documents, using particular colours to connect similar ideas; third, I “[went] ... through each one highlighting substantive statements” (Gillham, 2000); fourth, I read the transcripts again to check whether any important information was missing; fifth, I derived a set of units for each question through developing charts that compared



ideas from one participant to the next; sixth, I listed the set of resulting categories depicting key ideas about transition times, from most common to least common.

Through interpretation of the set of categories, I identified some transition challenges participants may have had at that time. In this case, obtaining the challenges, which actually significantly influenced their transition period, was the most difficult step. At last, I summarized all the categories of challenges Chinese immigrant participants in this particular study may have had in their childhood immigrant transition period. In the interview content analysis, making interpretations in the sixth step was the greatly significant part. Making interpretations includes “attaching significance to what was found, making sense of findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order” (Patton, 2002, p. 480, cited in Rossman & Rallis, p. 284).

In summary, the thematic categories emerging from the interviews can be divided into seven key areas, as follows:

1. Personal background;
2. Language barriers and English language learning;
3. Cultural difficulties experienced during transition time;
4. Social challenges experienced by participants;
5. Canadian national identity;
6. Advice for newcomers in Canada and suggestions for the treatment of newcomers in Canada;
7. Opinions towards sample picture books shown in the interviews.

It is crucial to note that I did not choose formal coding as the interview data analysis method. As I used category-directed questions, the answers in terms of each category can be accessed through each interview question. The answers based on each question then pointed to one or more of the particular categories I have listed above.

### **Picture Books Content Analysis**

Drawing on the content analysis chart developed by Brenna, Sun, and Liu (2017), I developed a routine for content analysis and utilized an adapted chart for gathering information related to results from interviews as well as Radical Change Characteristics. See Appendix B for the picture book content analysis template used with the 24 picture books in the study set.

In terms of the critical picture book exploration, during first reading I familiarized myself with the stories and themes in the picture books. Secondly, I applied the categories developed through the interview data to the reading of the picture books, reading them again for these patterns and themes, and then reading them a third time to examine alternative aspects of Canadian culture which I interpreted from my stance as a qualitative researcher. Picture books were then listed hierarchically in terms of greatest to least thematic consistency with the target categories. An annotated bibliography is provided in Appendix C, containing the 24 picture book titles from this set that conveyed the target categories.

In the content analysis (Berg, 2004), I utilized my personal experiences in Chinese and Canadian cultures to identify whether particular patterns and themes, drawn from the case study analysis, were evident in the picture books. Also, drawing from critical literacy theory (Ciaradiello, 2004; Green, 2001; Lewison, et al, 2002), and Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), I examined the set of picture books for new patterns and themes, including an exploration of cultural stereotypes and consideration of changing perspectives and boundaries. Rather than remaining at arm's length, the qualitative stance of this study allowed me the freedom to apply my own interpretations to the data, recognizing that my experiences with differences between Canada and Mainland China added insight to this process.

In terms of a consideration of Radical Change, I focused on the following categories, derived from Dresang (1999):

Type 2 Changing perspectives:

1. Multiple perspectives, visual and verbal;
2. Previously unheard voices;
3. Youth who speak for themselves.

Type 3 Changing boundaries:

1. Subjects previously forbidden;
2. Settings previously overlooked;
3. Characters portrayed in new, complex ways;
4. New types of communities;
5. Unresolved endings.

### **Validity and Reliability**

As one of the features of qualitative case study, the researcher functions as an interpreter (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Stake, 1995), and the exploration of research questions may involve researchers' many personal experiences and reflections. This corresponds to a key aspect of qualitative case study, which is to bring insights and discovery towards the case (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1994). In this way, many personal interpretations and unique understandings can be found in the data analysis of interviews and picture book texts and illustrations. However, researchers' personal interpretations and understandings should be able to be examined by qualitative inquiry (Peshkin, 1988), which implies that researchers need to critically approach and investigate the research questions (Hays & Singh, 2012; Peshkin, 1988) with sufficient rigor (Peshkin, 1988).

Two of the scientific benefits of case study involve objectivity and generalizability (Berg, 2004), which ground the validity and reliability of qualitative case study. Although a case study involves a researcher's personal interpretation, the research itself should still be conceived as objective and the findings can be generalized in a limited manner. Objectivity relies on the accuracy with which other researchers can reproduce the study, in order to reach the same result. To achieve this, I needed to accurately state every procedure in this research (Berg, 2004), which can secure the largest possibilities towards similar results from other researchers.

In this study, I focused on the phenomena of the connection between recent Canadian picture books and the recollections of three participants regarding their transition time to Canada as children. Further research might explore similar situations, using different sets of picture books, and different participants, towards equally effective results. Such reproduction can represent the reliability of this study.

In addition, another concern with qualitative research involves influences from powerful people or institutions (MacDonald and Walker, 1975; Merriam, 1988). Educational case study researchers can be affected, directly or indirectly, by people or institutions that finance them (MacDonald and Walker, 1977; Merriam, 1988). In this study, as I am a self-funded graduate student, I am free of any influences from any people or institutions, and the university under which I study has ethical requirements preventing conflict of interest situations from arising.

In respect to the semi-structured interviews, the conversations in the interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim, strategies important as data management and analysis tools

(Hay & Singh, 2012). These procedures supported the validity and reliability of the interviews, as checking-mechanisms are possible. Additionally, interview participants member-checked their words following the interview, and my interpretations of their words based on the interviews, to make sure all their perspectives in the thesis are correct (Hay & Singh, 2012). If they felt any information was inaccurate or strayed from their original meaning, the information would have been deleted or edited based on participants' will. In the case of this study, the participants have all agreed that the information presented is accurate.

### **Ethical Consideration**

First, ethics approval regarding the interviews was granted by the University of Saskatchewan before this research began. Second, participants read and signed the participation consent forms (See Appendix E) and data/transcript release forms (See Appendix F) to give permission for the interview, and in these consent forms they were fully informed of the purpose of the research, the procedure of the research, and the content of the interview. Third, their real names were replaced with pseudonyms in the research results and their personal information has remained confidential. In addition, their responses towards interview questions were not judged, and they shared without restraint or commentary from the researcher. In addition, they were able to withdraw from the interview or the research any time with any reason, until the member-checking was completed and analyzing the data formally began.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of the study involved the location of the participants, the small number of participants, and thus the lack of generalizability of findings. In addition, the choice of picture books also meant that results would be extrapolated from a narrow sample, reducing generalizability to other titles.

All three participants chosen for the study resided in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. As they all lived in one city in the middle of Canada, which may have unique regional culture in contrast to other Canadian places, their responses towards challenges they faced during their transition time might be similarly restricted. In this way, the catalogue of the difficulties newcomers in Canada may face will not generally be reflected by this study. For this reason, the analysis of picture books based on this catalogue may not provide the fully rich and thick exploration of a more comprehensive catalogue of immigrant challenges.

Because of the time requirements for robust in-depth interviews, a sample size of three was reasonable for this study, but not sufficient as a comprehensive pool towards the generalizability of findings outside this study group. This was a Master's level study, from which implications might support further, larger studies in order to follow up on interesting possibilities and early results.

The size of the picture book sample as another limitation was also related to the level at which this study was conducted and the opportunity that it might present itself as a pattern for further studies rather than a seminal study in and of itself. Since only 24 English picture books are in the 2016 SCBWI summer reading list, the findings from these books may not represent all picture books published by Canadian authors. As there may be several factors influencing which books can be on the list, the sample may not contain other published books during this time period, a factor which can significantly affect the findings of this research and limit its scope.

While somewhat limited in generalizability, I anticipate that this qualitative case study can offer deeper understanding related to immigrant populations, and, through connections with published picture books, suggest possibilities for picture book use that expand on current uses, especially in light of immigrant contexts. While previous studies have explored the immigrant experience (Haneda, 2006; Janks, 2012; Lau, 2012), as well as patterns and themes in picture books related to culture and national identity (Jin, 2015), because this study combined the two topics, it is original and unique on the landscape of current research.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The purpose of this research was to develop and apply a picture book evaluation template on the basis of challenges recalled by three participants discussing their immigration transitions to Canadian life. After the preparation of the template, a set of picture books was analyzed in terms of emerging as well as pre-determined themes related to cultural and social challenges. It was anticipated that these books might assist young Canadian immigrants from different countries to overcome difficulties within their immigration transition time. The results of the research were obtained through three main processes: the first involving semi-structured interviews with three adult participants who immigrated to Canada when they were children, the second applying a list of topics derived from these interviews to a set of Canadian picture books, and the third discovering additional patterns and themes appearing in the set of picture books.

The interviews explored linguistic, cultural, and social challenges that three immigrant participants recalled during their transitions to Canada as children. In addition, the interviews solicited advice for other newcomers as well as suggestions Canadians might keep in mind related to newcomers, as well as their responses to five picture books containing sample aspects of Canadian culture. From the interviews, I developed a catalogue of topics which were utilized to analyze the set of picture books. Results from the interviews were used to address the first research question: 1). *What are the transition-time challenges recalled by three adults who immigrated to Canada during ages 9 to 11?*

The set of picture books were analyzed according to categories developed from the interview data as well as other categories adapted from Dresang's (1999) notion of Radical Change (see Appendix C for data analysis chart). One of the categories developed from the interview data was combined with application of Lewison et al's (2002) critical literacy theory with respect to cultural stereotypes. The picture book analysis answered the second research question: *What patterns and themes parallel to the challenges recalled by these participants appear in the reading list set by authors who live in Canada (Summer 2016 Recommendations for SCBWI)?*

Finally, additional information regarding patterns and themes showing in the set of picture books was gathered to address the third research question: *What other patterns and themes related to Canadian images and perspectives appear in this set of picture books?*

### **Analysis of Interview Data**

The analysis of interview data from the three participants provided an examination tool for the second part of the data analysis, which explored themes in the set of picture books. The interview data was examined on the basis of seven pre-established categories: (a) personal background; (b) language barriers and English language learning; (c) cultural difficulties experienced during transition time; (d) social challenges experienced by participants; (e) Canadian national identity; (f) advice for newcomers in Canada and suggestions for the treatment of newcomers in Canada; and (g) opinions towards sample picture books shown in the interviews. As appearing in the results of the interview data analysis, the categories were divided into three types, showing a diverse lens for examining the set of picture books.

#### **Personal Background**

All three interview participants came to Canada between ages 10 and 11. David arrived in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan at age 10, with his parents. Caroline arrived in Calgary, Alberta at age 11 staying there for half an year, then moving to Regina, Saskatchewan for 9 years. At the time of the study, Caroline lived in Saskatoon. Rose came to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan at age 11.

Caroline and Rose's families both arrived in Canada one or two family members at a time. Rose came to Canada after her mother and other relatives on her mother's side had already moved to Canada. Caroline's father came to Canada three years earlier than Caroline, and even after Caroline moved to Canada, her mother remained in Mainland China. David's entire family arrived in Canada together.

Caroline mentioned that the reason why her father insisted on her coming to Canada related to advantages he believed were inherent in the Canadian education system. Her father believed the education system in Canada teaches useful information that will have practical value in students' lives.

Before coming to Canada, none of the three interviewees had clear ideas about Canada, the country they were coming to. David only knew that he was travelling to an English-speaking country. His first impression of Canada, after landing here, was the overwhelming proportion of white-skinned people. While Caroline was in China, she often confused Canada and Australia, since these two countries have similar sounding Chinese names. She had known Canada as an English-speaking country where people eat steak. Also, she was reminded of Henry Norman

Bethune, a Canadian doctor who was famous for helping Chinese during World War II. Rose had received some explanations and descriptions of Canada from her mother, involving the coldness of Canadian winters, and the fact that Canada is a bilingual country. In addition, Rose had learned some basic information about Canada in Chinese elementary school.

In terms of the time required for full integration into Canadian society, David, Caroline, and Rose all estimated their transition time might last for at least three years. Considering the language barrier, cultural differences, and social challenges, they generally agreed that cultural differences were the least painful and that cultural understanding was the easiest to pick up along the way. The language barrier was one of the things they put much effort into overcoming during the first several years.

Regarding cultural differences and social difficulties, David considered that Canadian cultural perspectives, greatly different from Chinese cultural perspectives, took him four or five years to get familiar with and to be able to practice independently. These included things like Canadian life styles, and different preferred ways of interaction with people in Canada. He did not indicate that he had experienced any serious social challenges during his transition time. For Caroline and Rose, social challenges were considered the biggest difficulties during their immigrant transition period and took the longest time to overcome. Caroline and Rose's answers about the length of transition and the key factors for successful integration into their new society were very close — they believed that success mostly depended on personality and they indicated that their transition took about four years.

In summary, before moving to Canada, all three participants had had an idea about Canada as an English-speaking country, and some fundamental information about Canadian life. However, they did not hold any cultural knowledge about Canada, including ideas about Canadian living habits, minority culture, Aboriginal culture. All three participants suggested that it took at least three years to adapt to life into Canada, in terms of linguistic, cultural, and social aspects, with David's estimate at four or five years.

### **Language Barriers and English Language Development**

David, Caroline and Rose could not speak fluent English when they first arrived in Canada. David learned English starting from alphabet letters in a Saskatoon elementary school. Although English class had been Caroline's favorite subject before she came to Canada, and her



English fluency was approximately at a grade 5-6 level in Chinese elementary school, it seemed as if her skills were greatly below this in Canadian terms. Caroline lost the interest and confidence in English upon her arrival; she said, “I used to like English. Because in elementary school, I love English, like the easiest class. After coming here, though, my English sucks.” When she arrived in Canada, Caroline only knew basic English words, far below her Canadian peers’ average English’s level. Because of this disparity, her confidence in English quickly eroded. The stage of Rose’s English at that time was similar to Caroline’s, with a background of English classes at their Chinese elementary schools insufficiently supporting linguistic fluency. Rose said “I was able to greet people but not fluently.”

Table 1 shows the results of how these three participants indicated that they improved their English in order to catch up with their Canadian peers.

Table 1

*Ways to Improve English Reported by David, Caroline, and Rose*

Ways to Improve Their English	Participants (N=3)
Conversation With People	David, Caroline, Rose
English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes	David, Caroline, Rose
Music, Music Television (MTV)	Caroline, Rose
Reading	David
Writing	David
Family’s Help	Rose
TV Shows	Caroline
Extra Help from a Teacher	Rose

ESL class was reported as a significant way for these three participants to acquire academic English during their first two years in Canada. Rose recalled that ESL class was not only a place she received extra help in English, but also a situation where she extended her social networks. Another heartwarming source of language help Rose received in her elementary school years involved her grade six teacher who utilized a software, google translate, to make the assignment sheets in Chinese. Rose recalled that experience as “memorable”.

One important way for Rose to quickly acquire general English was spending time with her cousins, who were born in Canada. As her cousins could speak little Chinese, she started to play, talk, and watch MTV with them mostly in English. During time with them, she learned new words and eliminated her Chinese accent; in the meantime, she also learned some topics of conversation enabling her to speak more easily to others.

After David, Caroline, and Rose recalled ways to catch up with their Canadian peers in English, I asked about whether they read picture books during the transition time. Although the three participants all acknowledged they had read a few picture books through ESL classes or based on personal interests, picture books were not seen as an important resource towards English learning or obtaining Canadian cultural knowledge. Although picture books were pedagogical tools in David’s ESL classes, David did not have much interest in them, since the complex stories in children’s novels were more attractive to him. To Caroline, however, the story within picture books was more significant. Caroline read a few picture books regarding dog training in her spare time since she was interested in dogs. Picture books were also important to Rose in the two-year period of her ESL class in Canada. With the help of pictures, picture books assisted both Caroline and Rose’s English acquisition and understanding of new English words.

In summary, with respect to the language barrier, all three participants struggled with English for about two years. They were enrolled in ESL classes at school to raise their academic English, while at the same time, they used some strategies to improve their general English for personal communication goals. Conversation with people, followed by easily accessed music and MTV, emerged as a common way for all three immigrants to acquire English. Picture books were significant reading materials in their ESL classes, while only Caroline read picture books out of personal interest.

**Patterns and themes derived from interview data.** From the interview data, I drew the significance of visual literacy into the list of categories through which the set of picture books could be examined. All three participants reported that they were not equipped with high proficiency in English, which might make the acquisition of English text especially difficult. Images, reported as helpful by Caroline and related to her personal reading, and supportive within the picture books read during ESL classes, became one of the aspects of the picture book set that deserved close attention.

### **Cultural Difficulties Experienced During Transition Time**

The concept of culture has numerous understandings from many scholars. Tylor (1974) stated that culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (p. 1). Culture is created by being a part of society, and it is not only passed on through textual media but also through images. Recently, James (2015) referred to culture as “a social domain that emphasizes the practices, discourses, and material expressions, which over time, express the continuities and discontinuities of social meaning of a life held in common” (p. 53). Drawing on James’s definition, cultures vary based on time and space. For this reason, the cultural differences experienced by the three participants stem from changes in both context and their stages in life.

Before David, Caroline, and Rose came to Canada, they had no knowledge about Canadian culture, and reported that they had not been introduced to information about Aboriginal cultures or minority cultures of people living in this country. After arriving in Canada, they all experienced the differences between Chinese culture and Canadian culture. However, rather than considering this experience in terms of cultural *difficulties*, they all preferred the term cultural *differences* or cultural shock.

**David.** David remembered that he could almost fully understand Canadian cultural perspectives and knowledge after four to five years. For example, David mentioned that food was a key difference between China and Canada. David thought that Canadian dishes usually are in certain types, as he stated in the interview “when you go to a restaurant, there are not many selections, ... [such as] Barbeque meat, salads, lasagna, and spaghetti”. “When you go to Canadian restaurants, it really doesn’t matter which one you go to. They all more or less sell the

same styles”. However, more selections and choices can be found in Chinese food. For this reason, David personally prefers Chinese food, due to its rich variety of cuisine styles. Another particular example he provided in the interview involved the different ways people *took action* in China and Canada. He characterized the *Chinese way* as conservative and traditional while the *Canadian way* was straightforward and assertive. In terms of religious holidays in Canada, for the first few years he treated them as simple holidays without understanding Christian traditions or history. Celebrations of Canadian holidays in David’s family followed Canadian practices, for example, a Christmas dinner at Christmas.

He acknowledged that gaining information about Canadian culture occurred in various contexts, including school, his leisure time reading, and getting explanations from his teachers and friends. His perception was that people were always friendly and patient in answering his questions. Also, for David, getting answers from people directly about cultural customs was suggested as more helpful than books.

**Caroline.** Caroline mentioned several examples of cultural differences between China and Canada. First, she realized that the value of extended family appeared as a conflict between her and her mother. Caroline indicated that her mother had traditional Chinese cultural perspectives, since she has lived in China for her whole life. Caroline visited her mother back in China a few years after coming to Canada. During a talk, she identified what she described as a huge difference of opinion regarding the concept of family. While Chinese people prefer that family members stay together and support one another, Caroline’s values had shifted so that she conceived family goals as being second to individual goals. Sometimes individual goals, to Caroline, should take precedence. For example, Caroline believed that a nursing home might be a good option for older people, once they lose their independence, while to Caroline’s mother, this thinking ran against Chinese cultural values. Caroline described that talk as a time when her mother did not listen, although “even [her] intention was good”. The theme of family, emerging from the interview data, became another significant element of Canadian culture to explore in the set of picture books.

A second example of cultural difference that Caroline presented concerned a popular way of socializing with other people in Canada — partying. When she had just arrived in Canada, Caroline could not get used to the practice of partying, since from her experience people usually

took time to get familiar and comfortable with each other, before proceeding to spend time together. However, during a party people get to know each other and spend time together in quick succession. During her transition time, party culture was a big challenge for Caroline to understand and gradually get used to.

The third example Caroline brought up in the interview, related to cultural differences, involved Chinese and Canadian food-related customs. A rule in Canada related to dining is eating with your mouth closed, while this is not a strict rule of etiquette in China. In addition, students in Canadian elementary schools need to bring lunch; however, lunch is provided in Chinese schools. After she came to Canada, at first she tended to bring items similar to the hot lunch provided in China for school lunch. Canadian students would tease her for requiring the microwave all of the time. At home, Caroline usually had Western cuisine with her father, as her father was not good at cooking. They often ate salad and Ukrainian perogies every day, even though Asian cuisine was her favorite.

Caroline also shared her learning experiences about Indigenous culture. During her transition time, she questioned the importance of learning about Aboriginal perspectives and knowledge. Caroline reported complaining about previous elementary school classes related to Aboriginal culture because she saw them as “guilt-tripping”. At that time, she did not have a deeper understanding of the real purposes of these classes. Today she has discovered the significance of Aboriginal cultures in Canada, especially living on treaty land, understandings that were not conveyed to her in elementary school.

Concerning religious practices of Canadians, Caroline had heard about several religious holidays, such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas, but did not know about the religious meanings behind them. In her impressions towards these holidays, “Thanksgiving is turkey; Easter is bunnies”. In this part, her comments in this regard were similar to David’s. In addition, she heard about Christianity, which was only limited to the name, “God”.

Caroline’s strategies performed to access Canadian culture included: forcing herself in making friends, who could explain the situation; joining different activities; and watching TV shows and movies.

**Rose.** In terms of cultural aspects during her transition time, Rose did not indicate that she had difficulties in fitting into Canadian culture. She referred to her family culture as

accepting and open towards Western cultures rather than adhering strictly to Chinese cultural perspectives. She recalled that it took her just three months to get familiar with and adapt to Canadian culture.

Indigenous culture was one of the topics Rose talked about related to the subject of cultural challenges. Rose encountered two opposite perspectives towards Aboriginal people, one from other people with Chinese cultural backgrounds who hadn't studied in Canada and the other from course-related readings and discussion that deepened her understanding of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. In Rose's Chinese cultural background she expressed that there were "a lot of negative things said about Aboriginal culture". Apart from hearing about two opposite ideas from family and school, she encountered several Aboriginal people in her life. Rose experienced dissonance caused by the two conflicting perspectives when interacting with Indigenous people, although at the time of the study this seemed to have been resolved in favour of a more critical lens on negative comments related to Aboriginal people.

Another cultural difference Rose described involved the way Canadians interact with each other. For example, walking on the street, strangers might smile and greet each other in a cheerful voice, while this kind of interaction would not be common in China. Cars on Canadian streets would stop and politely wait for crossing pedestrians, while in China pedestrians would have to wait for cars. At the time of the study, Rose still had strong impressions of these two daily practices. In terms of Canadian religious practices, she recalled that she did not have serious thoughts about religion in her transition time. In terms of religious national holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, Rose was shocked by the frequency of holidays during the school terms, since she had very few holidays in China. Before coming to Canada, she had already heard of Christmas, which was the only holiday she was familiar with during her transition time. Usually, her family spent holidays together to enjoy the time off. Also, Rose reported being open-minded to participating in any religious practices when visiting others' homes.

Similar to Caroline, Rose also mentioned the cultural difference related to ways of eating. Rose noted that Canadian people prefer eating with mouth closed, a custom that was pointed out to her by friends. Additionally, as Rose recalled, there were also times that her Canadian friends were plainly shocked by Rose's behaviours influenced by Chinese culture. In this case, Rose answered the questions they raised to her and explained the cultural customs.

With respect to the ways Rose tried to fit into Canadian culture, she highlighted that the key is being actively exposed to the new culture and accepting it. In addition, her new Canadian friends also helped her to understand a large amount of Canadian culture. MTV was another popular medium of culture transfer listed by Rose.

**Conclusion.** In summary, all three participants did not consider that the differences between Chinese culture and Canadian culture caused trouble in their transition time. David and Caroline both agreed that it took several years to get familiar with and adapt into Canadian culture, while the integration into a new culture seemed to be much quicker for Rose. In terms of gaining knowledge and perspectives of the new culture, the common ways reported by these participants were:

1. Making friends, who can explain things they did not understand;
2. TV shows, movies, MTV;
3. Reading;
4. Forcing yourself to be exposed to the new culture by participating in new activities.

Here, I would like to explain more about the point four. Caroline used the term “force”, which reflected that she had motivations that were not entirely pleasant. Also, Rose utilized the phrase “have to” to describe her practices to fit into Canadian culture. Both of them showed that there might be some internal and external difficulties in adapting to the new culture, although generally they did not acknowledge there were any challenges in learning Canadian culture.

Hall (1974) suggested that culture consists of two parts, internal and external. External culture can be conceived as outward behaviour, while internal aspects include beliefs, values, thoughts and patterns. The internal portion is much bigger than the external portion. For this reason, combined with the data from the interviews, it is reasonable to suggest that any themes and patterns, including knowledge and perspectives, showing differences between the Canadian culture and Chinese culture should be acknowledged and selected as examination categories.

**Patterns and themes derived from interview data.** To conclude the list of themes and patterns for examining the set of picture books, there are certain themes the three participants mentioned in the interviews, which are:

1. Differences in interaction with people because of different cultural background;

2. Family;
3. Food;
4. Holidays.

### **Social Challenges Experienced by Participants**

Social challenges could be conceived as the biggest difficulty the participants reported experiencing during their immigrant transition times, compared with cultural differences.

Caroline and Rose both admitted that it was hard for them to make friends during their transition time. However, David thought it was not difficult for him to interact with people, although he was bullied in elementary school during his transition period.

**David.** David believed that people around him usually appreciated his differences from others. From David's perspective, his friends found him an interesting person, because coming from a different cultural background empowered him to expand his friends' horizons. However, he recalled that he had been bullied in elementary school, since he was "easier to pick on" due to being a new student who was unfamiliar with English. He dealt with bullying by fighting back, which for him was an effective solution. Two key points from his experience involve ideas about: 1) being brave and confident when interacting with people; and 2) successfully dealing with bullies.

**Caroline.** Caroline compared her experiences relating to people in Calgary and Regina. Even though she only stayed in Calgary for half a year, Caroline recalled the experience as positive. From her perspective, her classmates were friendly, nice, and socially close to her, which she attributed to the small class size. However, she conceived the years in Regina as less happy. Perhaps because Regina was a smaller, less diverse, and less globalized city compared to Calgary, she had difficulties fitting into the community. She sensed that her classmates from Regina were more friendly towards people from the same ethnicity as themselves rather than people from other ethnicities.

Caroline assumed that her classmates in Regina had grown up with people from basically the same ethnicity as theirs, which led to less understanding of people from other cultural backgrounds. From her experience, I concluded that one significant category for examining the set of picture books, in order to aid the integration of immigrants into Canada, is a theme of multiculturalism. Experiences with a multiculturalism reading focus might help Canadian



students develop better understanding and empathy towards people from cultural backgrounds different than theirs.

Another example Caroline brought up was there were some immigrants who moved to bigger cities in Canada and who preferred to live and interact with people having the same ethnicity as theirs. They spoke their mother language rather than English and did not expose themselves much to diverse cultures. Their lives in Canada could be conceived as little different from their previous lives in their home country, as they remained isolated from Canadian society.

**Rose.** Similar to Caroline, Rose also had trouble with classmates during her transition period. As she was the only Chinese girl in the class, Rose could not figure out a way to fit in. Many of the students had known each other very well, having been together since kindergarten. Rose recalled that she did not have any friends and felt lonely throughout her time in elementary school. After graduating from elementary school, she went to a large high school with students from diverse backgrounds. Many Chinese immigrants chose this high school, as it provided ESL classes. Enrolled in this high school, Rose soon immersed into a social life surrounded by only people with Chinese background, which was her “comfort zone”. Finally, when she was in “grade 11, [she] ... started to become comfortable of being around classmates”. Starting from there, she made friends more easily with local students. Equipped with confidence, she was active in group projects, where she contributed ideas. She realized that her classmates also liked her personality and “accept[ed]” her, with examples from their positive comments on her high school yearbook. Rose recalled “anybody within the year, not even from my graduating class actually [knew] me. They th[ought] you [were] somebody they [were] comfortable hanging out with, ... [and] accepting you into their culture”. With friends from various backgrounds, she realized the importance of diversity. She conceived that experience as “step[ping] out of [her] cocoon and starting to ... enter into [a] new phase of life where I get to be exposed to new stuff, more stuff, and even be more interesting”.

Another story Rose shared in the interview involved her social experience in the ESL classes during her elementary study. As students in her ESL class were from diverse backgrounds, Rose felt she experienced a true multicultural environment. She perceived that the class was free from discrimination on the basis of language ability and cultural differences. From Rose’s experiences in regard to social challenges during transition time, I concluded four themes

through which to explore the set of picture books: 1) the importance of confidence; 2) loneliness; 3) taking charge socially; and 4) strategies for fitting in socially.

**Patterns and themes derived from interview data.** In summary, David, Caroline, and Rose all faced some social challenges in fitting into a new environment at school. In addition, Caroline's different experiences in Calgary and Regina highlighted the importance for Canadian students to learn about multiculturalism. A catalogue of themes and patterns that can be concluded from this section are:

1. Being brave and confident;
2. Dealing with being lonely;
3. Dealing with victimization;
4. Expanding social comfort zone;
5. Multiculturalism;
6. Strategies of socially fitting into a new environment.

### **Canadian National Identity**

National identity refers to individual's identity or a feeling of belonging in regard to one nation (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), which is a subjective sense regardless of legal citizenship status (Guibernau, 2004). The Canadian government aims to foster a national identity which can include people born in Canada and immigrants from other countries (Hamilton, Medianu, & Esses, 2013, p. 102).

David, Caroline, and Rose were Canadian citizens at the time of the study. David changed his citizenship to Canadian in 2006, while Caroline got hers two years after David. Rose received her Canadian passport in 2016. From their recollection, they never doubted their national identity during their transition time. They all admitted that acquiring Canadian national identity was a process that happened gradually over the years.

David got his Canadian citizenship based on his parents' decision. However, he considered holding a Canadian passport as convenient for world travel. However, compared with his friends who were born in Canada, David felt that he would "align more with Chinese culture" even once he was Canadian.

Caroline has had her Canadian citizenship for around nine years. Three years after she came to Canada she began to feel as if she were more Canadian than Chinese. When she returned

to China to visit her mother, she reported tensions between them on a number of topics, including politics.

Although Rose just changed her citizenship from Chinese to Canadian in 2016, she found her Canadian identity during grade 10-11. One day, Rose's mother "started to refer [her] ... as Canadian", which was a big surprise to her. From that time, she realized she identified with a Canadian national identity when she visited China, where at that time she generally found people's living styles strange to her. But back in Canada, Rose returned to thinking of herself as Chinese instead of Canadian.

From David, Caroline, and Rose's experience, it appears that acknowledging Canadian national identity was usually tied to conflicts between Canadian culture and Chinese culture where the participants gravitated towards the Canadian way. In terms of Canadian national identity, the participants were triggered by seeing themselves behaving as Canadian and/or thinking as Canadian. Interestingly, both David and Rose mentioned that they considered themselves as Chinese rather than Canadian.

Drawing on Hamilton et al. (2013), Canadian national identity towards immigrants includes their home countries' cultures. It is not hard to understand that surrounded by people who were born and raised in Canada, David and Rose could sense the differences, which were the Chinese cultural influences in their daily life. For this reason, they conceived themselves as more Chinese than Canadian, compared to people born in Canada. Identity in these terms seems fluid and nuanced rather than general and all encompassing.

This section highlighted the significance of cultural influence on the three participants. Also, it displayed the trajectory of immigrants acquiring a new culture through their daily life, day by day, in a longterm fashion.

### **Advice for Newcomers in Canada and Suggestions for the Treatment of Newcomers in Canada**

Through their own personal experience in transiting into a new society, all three participants provided valuable advice for newcomers in Canada and suggestions for Canadians in relation to newcomers.

In terms of advice for newcomers in Canada, the first suggestion was from David and Rose, which is to be open-minded to the new culture in Canada, trying to accept and adapt to the new culture instead of holding on to the past.

The second piece of advice was from Rose, who recommended that people be themselves. “Don’t be afraid of showing other people yourself. ... People will accept the way [you] are”.

Other advice provided by Caroline was to prepare ahead, which meant to do the research before coming to Canada. Do research and be familiar with Canadian culture, including minority cultures and Aboriginal cultures. In addition, look for basic information about the place where you are going. For example, be prepared for winter in Saskatchewan. Search for information for children about schools. In addition, monetary preparation is a necessary support for starting a new life. Starting to build social relations with people in the place where you are going is another worthy advance preparation. Today, with the rapid development of technology, Caroline recommended connecting with people through social media. In her view, setting up new social relations can not only provide you information you need, but also lend you a hand if you have trouble in the new land.

Regarding suggestions for people in Canada to newcomers, there were two main suggestions: 1) be open-minded and lenient to newcomers; and 2) be welcoming and helpful towards new immigrants. For the first piece of advice, participants hoped people in Canada can be open-minded towards something they may not understand. Newcomers’ behaviours and ways of thinking come from cultures of their home countries, instead of bad intentions. Do not be strict with newcomers. Caroline advised Canadian people to “be open, be warm”. Caroline and Rose, in particular, hoped that people already in Canada can offer a hand to newcomers. Rose said “my mom always tell[s] me, if you do encounter any [... newcomers ...], offer them a hand”. For example, be a translator for new immigrants who may not be good at English. Offer them answers towards questions they have, such as the role of a health card, and where to get it.

**Patterns and themes derived from interview data.** The advice in this section can be concluded in terms of significant themes and patterns, later applied to the examination of the set of picture books. These include the value of:

1. Open mindedness;
2. Being yourself;

3. Being welcoming and lenient towards newcomers;
4. Being helpful to others;
5. Multiculturalism.

### **Opinions towards Sample Picture Books Shown in the Interviews**

Generally, David, Caroline, and Rose agreed that picture books relating Canadian culture could be a good starting point to access English learning as well as cultural familiarity.

Towards the two picture books, *The Hockey Sweater* (Carrier, Cohen, 2014), and *Canadian Jingle Bells* (Townsin, Harrington, 2011), Caroline and Rose commented on Canadian content, including hockey and beavers. From Caroline's perspective, *The Hockey Sweater* (Carrier, Cohen, 2014) also expressed conflicting attitudes between Anglophone and Francophone cultures.

*Ride the Big Machines Across Canada* (Mok, 2015) was a simple picture book presented to the participants for their initial responses. Caroline and Rose liked it, since it covered the feature of each province in Canada. Rose proposed that this picture book could be nice material for newcomers to learn about Canada, and especially useful for people immigrating to big cities. However, along with appreciation, Caroline wondered whether it might show any provincial stereotypes or generalizations that could be unhelpful. Such negative aspects may influence newcomers' impressions towards people from different places in Canada.

Another two picture books, *Wild Eggs* (Napayok-Short, Wright, 2015), *Missing Nimama* (Florence, Thisdale, 2015), from Caroline's and Rose's perspectives, were important tools for learning Aboriginal culture, especially for young readers. As they reported how difficult it was as children to build up positive ideologies towards Indigenous people and cultures, picture books with meaningful stories and supportive images were conceived as helpful. However, Caroline and Rose both viewed these two books with critical eyes. They questioned whether any stereotype of Aboriginal characters were presented in the books, and cautioned about authorship. Caroline believed that it would be better to have Aboriginal people write picture books reflecting Indigenous cultures, as First Nations people know their cultures better than people from other ethnicities. Another concern from Rose involved the lack of background stories about the event shown in the picture books, such as the missing Aboriginal women referred to in *Missing*

*Nimama* (Florence, *Thisdale*, 2015). Providing background information about the Aboriginal stories in the picture books would be a way to extend readers' understanding.

**Patterns and themes derived from interview data.** From the last section of interviews, analysis categories in regards to examining the set of picture books were identified as:

1. Stereotypes of people from certain cultural backgrounds;
2. Multiculturalism;
3. Necessary background information.

## **Conclusion**

From the three interviews, David, Caroline, and Rose all had experienced challenges with respect to linguistic, cultural, and social aspects. Caroline and Rose believed that their significant difficulties were mostly in social aspects. In addition, from their own transition experiences and now being Canadian citizens, David, Caroline, and Rose all provided potentially useful advice for newcomers and suggestions for people in Canada to newcomers, aiming to help newcomers to have an easier transition time. At the end of the interview, the three participants offered their opinions towards five sample picture books containing Canadian images and themes. Their responses to my interview questions provided data leading to various themes and patterns, which I have used to develop a template for examining the set of picture books.

**Patterns and themes derived from interview data.** In conclusion, the categories applied later to the picture book set, and drawn from the analysis of the interviews, are as follows:

### Type 1 Visual information

1. Illustrations conveying cultural information.

### Type 2 Textual themes on cultural aspects

1. Additional background information of stories in the picture books;
2. Differences in interaction with people based on different cultural background;
3. Family;
4. Food;
5. Holidays;
6. Multiculturalism;
7. Stereotypes of people from certain cultural backgrounds.

### Type 3 Textual themes on social perspective

1. Being helpful to others;
2. Being yourself;
3. Being welcoming and lenient towards newcomers;
4. Being brave and confident;
5. Dealing with being lonely;
6. Dealing with victimization;
7. Expanding of social comfort zone;
8. Open mindedness;
9. Strategies of socially fitting into a new environment.

### **Analysis of Picture Books**

#### **Themes and Patterns from Interviews**

**Visual information: illustrations conveying cultural information.** Within the set of picture books, the illustrations of nineteen picture books showed the Canadian culture or cultures of different countries. Nature and geographic landscape appeared as one of the main types in this section. For example, *West Coast Wild: A Nature Alphabet* (Hodge, Reczuch, 2015), *Driftwood Dragons: and other Seaside Poems* (Brown, Heikalo, 2012), and *A Picnic at the Lighthouse* (North, Keating, 2016) presented West Coast scenes and nature around the Atlantic Ocean. *Shaping up Summer* (Flatt, Barron, 2014) presented various natural geography of Canada. *Fire Pie Trout* (Mosher, Benoit, 2014) showed the Canadian landscape with wild animals, mountains, rivers, while *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014), illustrated the specific environment of Nunavut. Other than Canadian nature landscapes, western city and farm scenes also are presented in *Gabby Wonder Girl* (Grant, Dolby, 2016), *Mae and the Moon* (Gigot, Gigot, 2015), *The Chicken Cat* (McLellan, Cassidy, 2000), and *Skypig* (Coates, Rizzo, 2016).

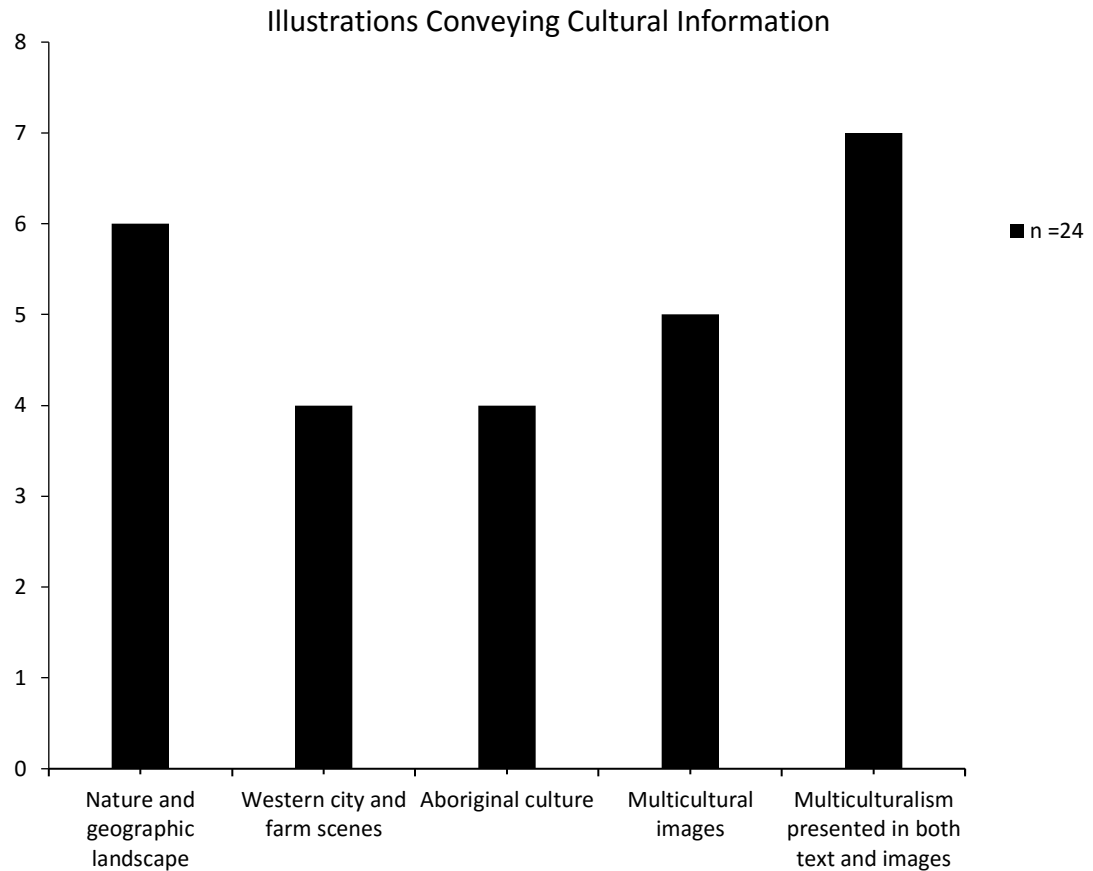
Multicultural features also appeared to be delivered through background illustrations. Illustrators commonly constructed a multicultural background even when multiculturalism isn't apparent in the text itself. Examples of this include *Bringing the Outside In* (Siddals, Barton, 2016), *Shaping up Summer* (Flatt, Barron, 2014), *Manner Are Not for Monkeys* (Tekavec, Huyck, 2016), *The Chicken Cat* (McLellan, Cassidy, 2000), and *West Coast Wild: A Nature Alphabet* (Hodge, Reczuch, 2015).

An interesting visual element in the picture book, *Gabby Wonder Girl* (Grant, Dolby, 2016), is an “Aboriginal medicine wheel” (Joseph, 2013) appearing on the boy’s shirt, although the author does not mention the boy’s cultural background. In addition to the Aboriginal medicine wheel, a mysterious stone feature resembling an inuksuk is utilized as an example of letter “i” in the book *Gabby Wonder Girl* (Grant, Dolby, 2016), as well. Two picture books, *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014), and *Fire Pie Trout* (Mosher, Benoit, 2014), directly introduced Aboriginal people’s life and culture. The illustrations in these books extend the text, going beyond information already provided. The rest of the picture books illustrated different cultures through their text and illustrations, including *No More Beige Food* (Shirliff, Kügler, 2016), *In a Cloud of Dust* (Fullerton, Deines, 2015), *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), *Malaika’s Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016), *Hala’s Window* (Mirza, Mhasane, 2015), *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014), and *Bagels from Benny* (Davis, Petricic, 2003). Of the 24 books in the study set, 12 included illustrations that represented multiculturalism. Figure 1 shows different types of visual illustrations conveying cultural information in the set of picture books.



Figure 1

*Evidence of Illustrations Conveying Cultural Information in Study Set of 24 Picture Books*



**Themes on cultural aspect.** From the interview data, I have drawn seven specific themes related to improving immigrants' understanding of Canadian culture as well as Canadian people's knowledge about various cultures of other ethnicities. These themes are as follows:

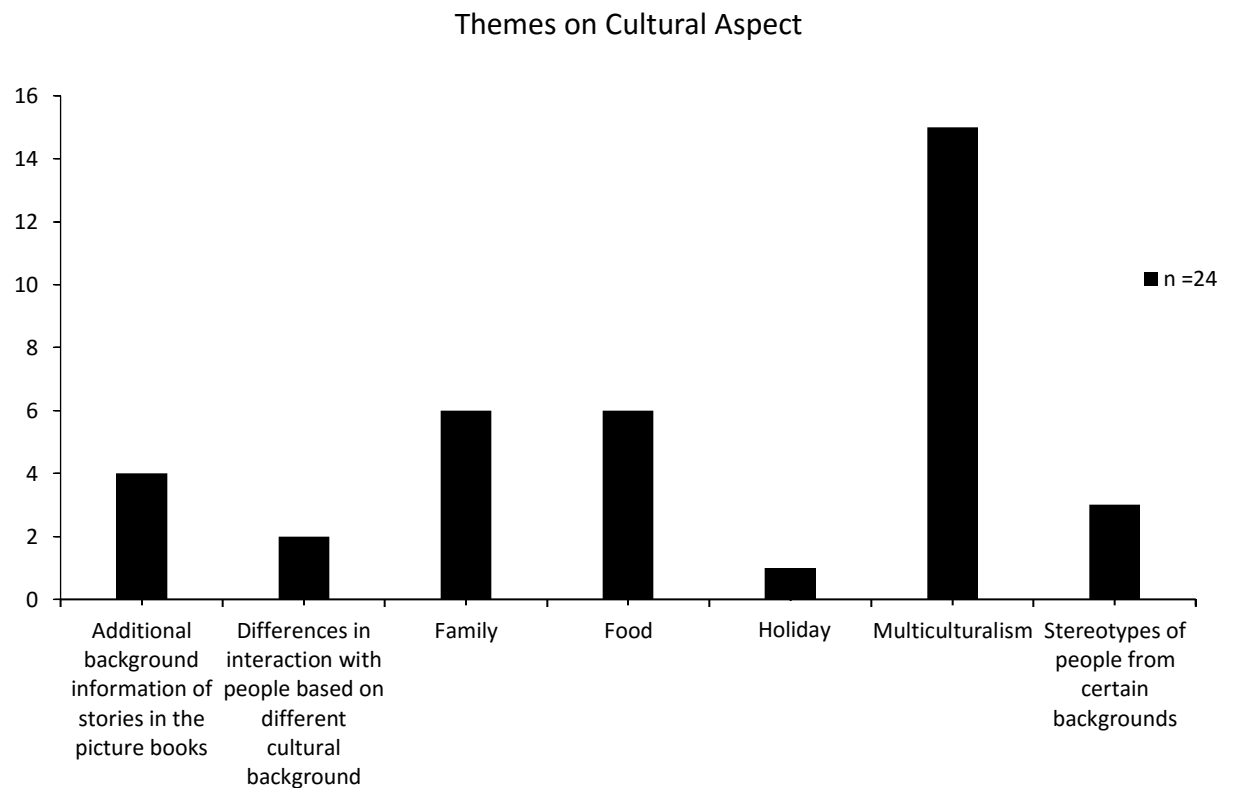
1. Additional background information of stories in the picture books;
2. Differences in interaction with people based on different cultural background;
3. Family;
4. Food;

5. Holidays;
6. Multiculturalism;
7. Stereotypes of people from certain cultural backgrounds.

Figure 2 shows the results of the numbers of picture books presenting different themes in terms of cultural aspect.

Figure 2

*Evidence of Themes on Cultural Aspect in the Study Set of 24 Picture Books*



***Additional background information of stories in the picture books.*** Four out of 24 picture books have provided additional information for better understanding of the stories. As *West Coast Wild: A Nature Alphabet* (Hodge, Reczuch, 2015) introduced the West coast of

Canada in illustrations along with teaching the alphabet through textual references, additional pages including information of the Pacific west coast and preserved rationale for preservation can be found at the end of this picture book. In addition, Hodge also listed several websites and books about further investigations of Pacific west coast. *Gabby Wonder Girl* (Grant, Dolby, 2016) provided more information about the inuksuk in the additional pages after the story ended. Information on organizations related to bicycle donation projects was provided as author's note in *In a Cloud of Dust* (Fullerton, Deines, 2015). In *Shaping up Summer* (Flatt, Barron, 2014), readers can find nature notes at the end of the picture book. Through these nature notes, readers can learn more about the ecological knowledge behind each animal shown in the book. Canadian animals such as the beaver, narwhal, and coyote, are contextualized here.

***Differences in interaction with people based on different cultural background.*** Two picture books in the study set present the differences in the ways of people's interaction, in terms of different cultural background. In *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), readers can find different interactions within family members and friends in diverse countries, such as Jane's family in English prefers playing puzzle with her parents after work, while Jean-Luc from France cooks dinner with his grandfather and his father after work together. Another example in this picture book is that Ryan's family from Texas, U.S.A, do not like big trips, while Ming Chieh's family living in Vancouver, Canada, usually go hiking together. *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014) is another picture book introducing interactions within an Inuit family in Nunavut. In addition, Simon, the main character, shows to readers modern Canadian children's ways in spare time activities, however, his grandparents still demonstrate Inuit old ways, such as preferring family get-togethers for playing games, dancing, and singing. *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014) also presents differences in interactions between elders and young people.

***Family.*** Many of the picture books set the stories as involving the main characters with their families. However, "family theme" here refers to a story mainly constructed within a family whose cultural background is clearly shown. Six picture books from the set identify such a family theme. These are: *A Picnic at the Lighthouse* (North, Keating, 2016), *Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016), *Mae and the Moon* (Gigot, Gigot, 2015), *The Old Ways* (Chapman,

*Mantha*, 2014), *Fire Pie Trout* (Mosher, Benoit, 2014), and *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014).

*Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016), for example, outlines a Caribbean family. When Malaika's mother goes to Canada for a better life in order to support her family financially, this story revolves around the family life of Malaika and her grandmother back at home. It also illustrates a life for people from immigrant families in a globalized context.

Although the main story in *Mae and the Moon* (Gigot, Gigot, 2015) involves how Mae tries to chase the moon, this picture book conveys various activities that all family members do together in their spare time. *A Picnic at the Lighthouse* (North, Keating, 2016) presents a Canadian family life that children have a close relationship with their father, instead of mother in many other cultures. *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014) and *Fire Pie Trout* (Mosher, Benoit, 2014) deliver the family theme through stories between grandparents and grandchild. These two picture books express Aboriginal ways of life in regards to family. In *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014), an activity of Aboriginal storytelling was described in detail. Simon had a happy evening with his grandparents in the storytelling context.

*Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014) is a book introducing 14 different family cultures around the world, including Canada, USA, Mexico, Brazil, England, Netherlands, France, Poland, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Pakistan, Mongolia, South Korea. This picture book covers different aspects of a family, such as size, history, culture of a family in different places.

**Food.** Food themes appear in *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014), *A Picnic at the Lighthouse* (North, Keating, 2016), *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016), *Hala's Window* (Mirza, Mhasane, 2015), and *Bagels from Benny* (Davis, Petricic, 2003). *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014) explores common cuisines for people from different countries, for example, Shabbat for people in Israel, and beet soup and pierogi for Zofia's family from Poland. In addition, illustrations in *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014) conveys more information on a food theme, even when the text does not mention a specific dish. *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016) is a picture book that portrays various kinds of food in different cultures, including Thai food, Mexico cuisine, dishes from the Middle East, and French cuisine. This picture book presents a featured dish for each region, such as chicken pad Thai representing Thai food, quesadillas for

Mexico cuisine, spiced kibbe as Lebanese food, and mousse as a French specialty. In *A Picnic at the Lighthouse* (North, Keating, 2016), readers can discover the common food people usually have for picnics, such as cheese sandwiches and chocolate cake. One scene in *Hala's Window* (Mirza, Mhasane, 2015) shows the girl living in Pakistan eating crunchy parathas and chai for breakfast. Although *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014) is a folktale, it still contains information on dumplings as Japanese food in ancient times. *Bagels from Benny* (Davis, Petricic, 2003) presents a Judaic culture, where people love bagels.

**Holiday theme.** Holiday themes can be found in only one of the set of 24 picture books, which is *Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016). The story of *Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016) was constructed through descriptions about the celebration of Carnival, an important holiday in Africa. In addition, the whole story surrounds the Carnival festival, especially in the preparation of costume.

**Multiculturalism.** Multiculturalism is a common theme in the set of picture books, 15 of which depict a multicultural context. This theme appears in the text, the illustrations, or both. Aboriginal culture appears in three titles: *Gabby Wonder Girl* (Grant, Dolby, 2016), *The Old Ways* (Chapman, Mantha, 2014), and *Fire Pie Trout* (Mosher, Benoit, 2014). Other stories where various cultures appear include: *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016), *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), *In a Cloud of Dust* (Fullerton, Deines, 2015), *Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016), *Hala's Window* (Mirza, Mhasane, 2015), *Bagels from Benny* (Davis, Petricic, 2003), *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014), *Bagels from Benny* (Davis, Petricic, 2003). Apart from the books which aim to introduce global contexts, African culture, the Middle East, Judaic culture, and Japanese culture are shown in the picture books, respectively.

Religion is a topic presenting multiculturalism. For example, in *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), Jane's mother reads Bible stories to her and her little brother, while a family from Pakistan reads a holy book of Islam before going to bed.

Within the picture book *Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016), a lady named Ms. Chin, with an Asian look, is also shown as an important character, even though the main story happened in Africa. African context is usually conceived as a multicultural context to Canadian

readers; meanwhile, this picture book presents Asian information within an African cultural frame, which is a multiculturalism presented within another multiculturalism.

Picture books where cultural references appear only in the illustrations, and not in the text, include: *West Coast Wild: A Nature Alphabet* (Hodge, Reczuch, 2015), *Bringing the Outside In* (Siddals, Barton, 2016), *Shaping up Summer* (Flatt, Barron, 2014), *Manner Are Not for Monkeys* (Tekavec, Huyck, 2016).

***Stereotypes of people from certain backgrounds.*** Combined with critical literacy theory (Lewison et al, 2002), stereotypes of people from certain backgrounds were examined through a critical lens. Lewison et al (2002) stated that critical literacy contains at least two of the four dimensions, and in this study the dimensions that appeared were “disrupting the commonplace” (p. 198) and “interrogating multiple viewpoints” (p. 198). In the examination, I especially explored whether generalizations appear about people from certain backgrounds. The result was that three of the set of 24 picture books had potential to deliver stereotypes to readers.

*Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016) and *In a Cloud of Dust* (Fullerton, Deines, 2015), are books telling stories, which happened in Africa. However, both of the books focus on African people in poverty. With limited characters to break this image, these two picture books might give people an ideology that people in Africa are all from less than satisfactory living conditions.

In *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), there is only one family presented for each country. Although the author consulted each person originating from the country for a personal story and the culture of the country, this book may generalize the diverse cultures of each country to one example of each country. For this reason, this picture book may reproduce stereotypes for readers.

One example of breaking stereotypes is the book, *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016). The beginning of the story breaks a stereotype about Asian families. At the beginning of the story, Wilma, in the illustrations, has Asian heritage. Her family members all have an Asian appearance. However, her family usually has western dishes instead of Asian food, which is a trigger for Wilma to find global recipes in order to try new food. This breaks the stereotype of Asians who stick to their food traditions.

**Themes on social perspective.** After the data analysis of three interviews, themes on social perspective were drawn from the difficulties that the participants have encountered in their transition experiences. The nine thematic categories in regards to social aspect, are as follows:

1. Being helpful to others;
2. Being yourself;
3. Being welcoming and lenient towards newcomers;
4. Being brave and confident;
5. Dealing with being lonely;
6. Dealing with victimization;
7. Expanding of social comfort zone;
8. Open mindedness;
9. Strategies of socially fitting into a new environment.

Figure 3 shows the results of numbers of picture books presenting themes on social perspective.

Figure 3

*Evidence of Themes on Social Perspective in the Study Set of 24 Picture Books*

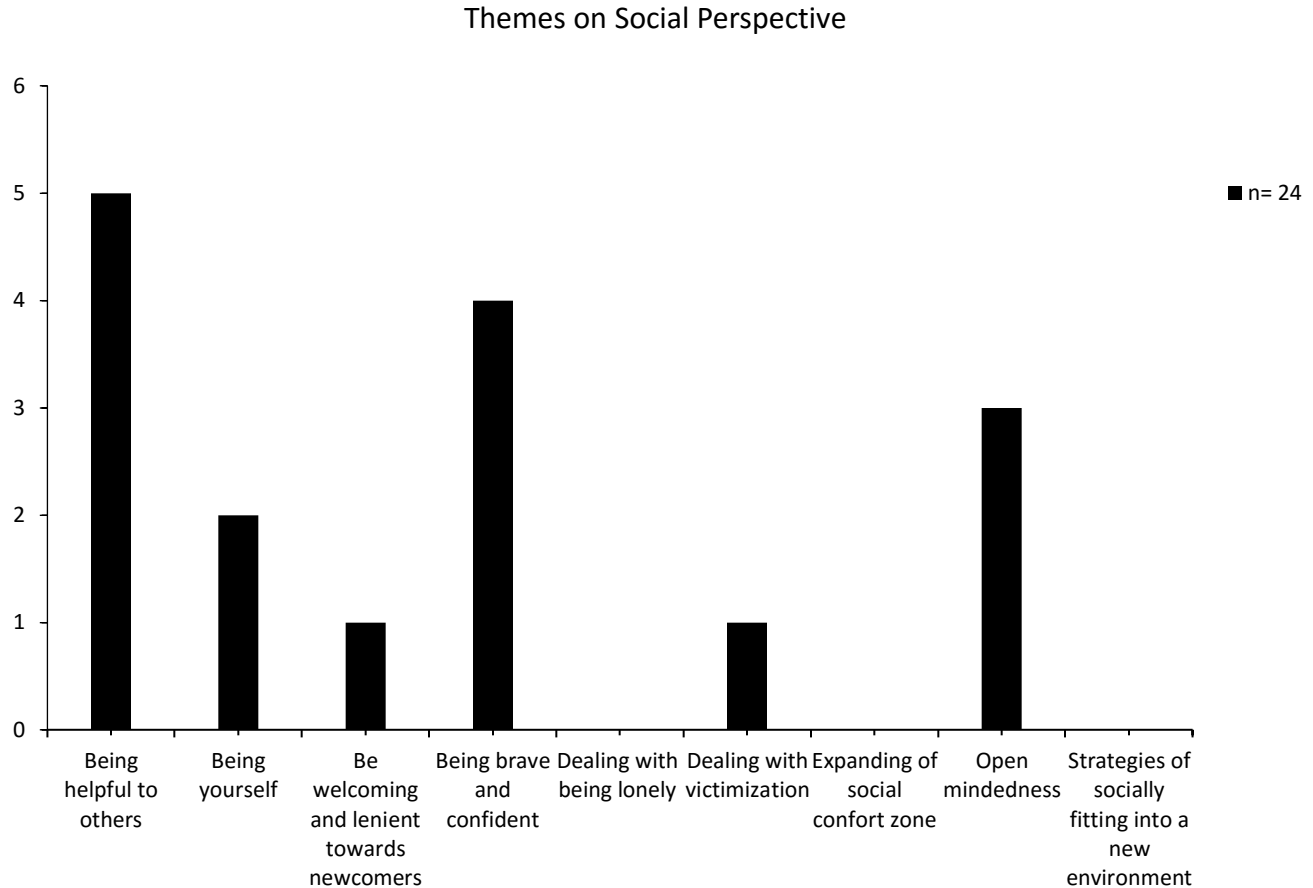


Figure 3 shows three popular themes on social perspective, which are being helpful to others, being brave and confident, and open-mindedness. These three themes are conveyed by three or more picture books. In contrast, another three themes raised from interview data have zero presentation in the set of 24 picture books; absent themes include dealing with being lonely, expanding of social comfort zone, and strategies of socially fitting into a new environment.

***Be helpful to others.*** Five out of the 21 picture books in the set have conveyed the ideology of being helpful to newcomers. *The Chicken Cat* (McLellan, Cassidy, 2000), involves the old hen, Guinevere, adopting and helping the newcomer, Merlin, to make Merlin's life better. In *Squish Rabbit* (Battersby, 2011), a little rabbit, Squish, helps a squirrel. Benny in



*Bagels from Benny* (Davis, Petricic, 2003) uses bagels to help people who are in need. In *Skypig* (Coates, Rizzo, 2016), Jack uses all his power to help his friend, a pig, to reach his dream, which is flying. In *In a Cloud of Dust* (Fullerton, Deines, 2015), Anna, living in a village in Tanzania, did not receive a bicycle because of late arrival, however, she helps her friends learn and practice riding. In turn, her friend, Mohammad helps Anna by lending her a bike to go home.

***Be yourself.*** Two picture books convey a message of being yourself bravely and politely in a new environment. When Wilma Lee Wu in the story, *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016), visits her French neighbour to get new recipes, she refuses to learn how to make frog legs. This reflects that Wilma follows her own likes and dislikes. In *Fire Pie Trout* (Mosher, Benoit, 2014), the little girl fishes in her own way, without killing the worm like people usually do. She is not afraid of catching no fish, but rather prefers to be kind.

***Be welcoming and lenient towards newcomers.*** One picture book shows the theme of being welcoming and lenient to newcomers. In *The Chicken Cat* (McLellan, Cassidy, 2000), the old hen, Guinevere, demonstrates a welcoming and lenient attitude towards the newcomer, Merlin. She acts as an adopted mother to protect this little cat.

***Being brave and confident.*** Four picture books present the main character with a brave and confident attitude towards life. In *Skypig* (Coates, Rizzo, 2016), a pig tries numerous times and in different ways to reach his dream with help from his friend. *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014) is not afraid of rumours about a bad ogre. She tries to find him and eventually makes friends. Without having money to buy her favorite costume, Malaika in *Malaika's Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016), eventually settles with confidence on wearing a costume made by her grandmother. Mae in *Mae and the Moon* (Gigot, Gigot, 2015) is not afraid to chase her dream to play with the moon.

***Dealing with victimization.*** One picture book in the set, *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014), has covered this theme. The peach girl in the story helps the ogre out of a bad situation, which can be conceived as overcoming bullying.

***Open mindedness.*** Main characters in these three picture books, *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender, 2014), *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016), and *Skypig* (Coates, Rizzo, 2016) deal with open-mindedness. Peach girl, in the Japanese context, is not afraid of the rumour of an ogre. She views it with open mindedness, which eventually leads the ogre and the girl to become

friends. Wilma Lee Wu and her brother in the book, *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliff, Kügler, 2016), have open mindedness in journey of exploring new food. *Skypig* (Coates, Rizzo, 2016) delivers that Jack always view his pig friend's dream of flying with open mindedness and encouragement.

### **Radical Change Theory Analysis**

In order to analyze the set of picture books through a lens of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), the analysis was divided into two groups according to the three types of Radical Change:

Type 2 Changing perspectives:

1. Multiple perspectives, visual and verbal;
2. Previously unheard voices;
3. Youth who speak for themselves.

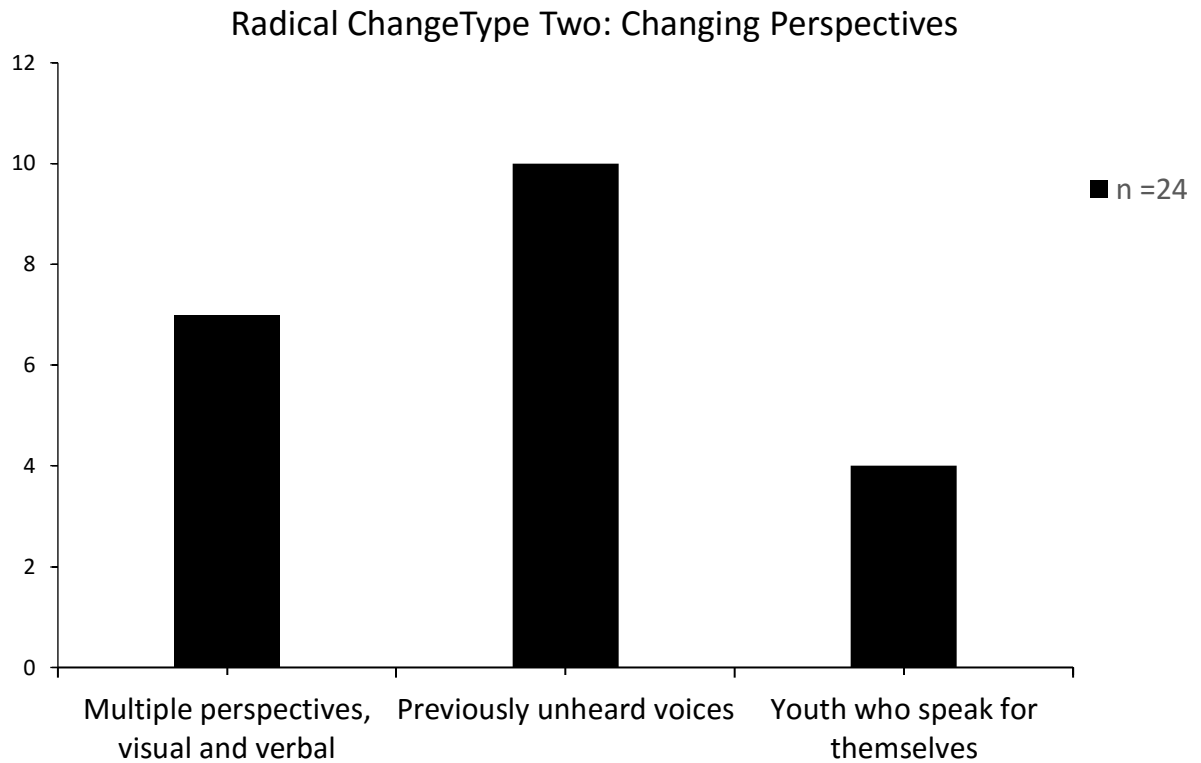
Type 3 Changing boundaries:

1. Subjects previously forbidden;
2. Settings previously overlooked;
3. Characters portrayed in new, complex ways;
4. New types of communities;
5. Unresolved endings.

Figure 4 illustrates the results of Radical Change Type Two emerging in the study set of 24 picture books. The details of each book are showed in Table 2 (See Appendix H).

Figure 4

*Evidence of Changing Perspectives in the Study Set of 24 Picture Books*



From Table 2 in Appendix H, thirteen picture books are apparent that belong to Type Two of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), specifically changing perspectives. In Figure 4, seven picture books have *multiple perspective, visual and verbal*, 10 for *previously unheard voices*, and four for *youth who speak for themselves*.

Figure 5 illustrates the results of Radical Change Type Three emerging in the study set of 24 picture books. The details of each book are showed in Table 3 (See Appendix H).

Figure 5

*Evidence of Changing Boundaries in the Study Set of 24 Picture Books*

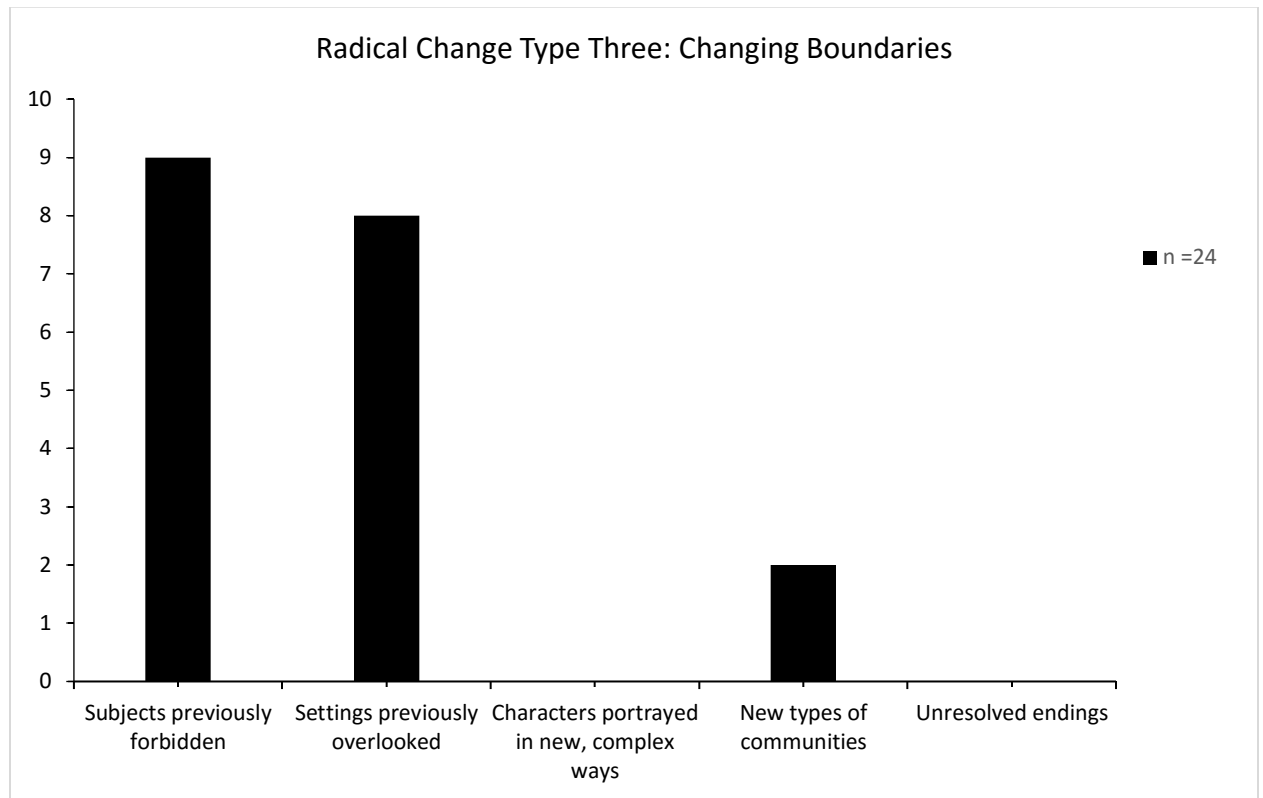


Table 3 in Appendix H shows nine picture books have changing boundaries. From Figure 5, nine picture books have characteristics of *subjects previously forbidden*, eight books convey *settings previously overlooked*, and two have a feature of *new types of communities*. However, none of the 24 picture books portrays *characters portrayed in new, complex ways* or *unresolved endings*.

**Additional Themes and Patterns showing in the Set of Picture Books**

Following the two main sections of results, which included data analysis of three interviews and the examination of the set of picture books from the catalogues developed from the interviews as well as the lens of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999), other emerging themes and patterns appeared in the set of picture books during my analysis.

First, themes and patterns on pure human love exist in many of these picture books, especially love between mother and child. Picture books on this theme are *Mama's Day with Little Gray* (Reid, Bryant, 2014) and *The Pocket Mommy* (Eugster, Goldsmith, 2013). These two picture books focus on the pure love between mother and child, without any other featured settings and themes which may divert readers' attention.

Second, a theme of nutrition for feeding animals in zoos are presented through a non-fiction genre in *Worms for Breakfast: How to Feed a Zoo* (Becker, Boake, 2016). Although a variety of zoos around the world are displayed in this picture book, no distinct multiculturalism related to human beings and cultures can be found. With knowledge on feeding animals displayed in real pictures of each insects and animals, this picture book can be conceived as a literature presenting pure knowledge in a way of placing readers in a zoo as feeders.

In summary, the set of pictures books above have covered additional themes and patterns other than any which can help assist immigrants to easily and better transition into a new society. The themes they contain are pure love between mother and child, and non-fiction knowledge.

### **Summary of Picture Book Analysis**

In summary, the categories emerging from the interviews best represented in the picture book set are (a) illustrations conveying cultural information, (b) multiculturalism, (c) themes of family, and (d) theme of food. The categories not represented include (a) dealing with being lonely, (b) expanding of social comfort zone, and (c) strategies of social fitting into a new environment. There is evidence of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) in terms of changing boundaries and changing perspectives, although this is limited to topics such as *characters portrayed in new, complex ways* or *unsolved endings*. An examination of the picture book set of additional themes and patterns, which do not belong to any categories emerging from interview data analysis, are pure mother love and non-fiction knowledge.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The purpose of this study was to develop and apply a picture book evaluation template created on the basis of challenges recalled by three participants discussing their immigration transitions to Canadian life. After the preparation of the template, a set of picture books was analyzed in terms of emerging as well as pre-determined themes related to cultural and social challenges. Three main sections appear in the chapter ahead: discussion of results, a summary of my research journey, and implications for further research. The discussion section contains two parts: (a) discussion related to the analysis of the interviews; and (b) discussion related to the analysis of patterns and themes in the set of picture books.

### **Discussion of the Analysis of the Interviews**

Within the three interviews, the participants, David, Caroline, and Rose presented diverse trajectories of their immigration transition. To each immigrant in Canada, challenges in transition may be varied. However, within the interviews, similarities as well as differences emerged, pointing to themes involving the following: diversity of family members; the role of picture books in their transition time; social challenges; and Canadian national identity.

### **Family**

David, Caroline, and Rose experienced different family situations related to their Canadian immigration. David, an only child, came to Canada accompanied by his parents. Caroline and Rose travelled with families divided. Caroline came to Canada to live with her father, while her mother remained in China. Rose and her mother lived in Saskatoon, separated from her father. In addition to Rose's cousins, who lived in the same city with Rose, many of Rose's other relatives were in North America. The family dynamics of these three participants were different, which implied a potential for different family problems in their personal lives.

Another key point about family mentioned by Caroline and Rose was the open and welcoming attitude of their parents. Even though immigrant families are differently composed, the attitude towards Canada appeared to have influenced their smooth integration. Rose's mother was open to western cultures, and encouraged that she did not stick to the traditional Chinese values. As Rose said "my grandparents and my parent always encourage me to, at least be yourself, or be happy. ... [M]y family is always accepting like we accept the mistake you have done", this open attitude provided her open-mindedness and critical eyes to encounter and to

analyze the difficulties she faced. As Rose recalled, her mother cared less about whether her mistakes brought shame to her family; instead, she believed the important point was whether you realized the mistake. Rose reported facing her transition challenges and finally overcoming them in her own way. Caroline also said that her father did not stick to Chinese culture, either. She indicated that, “He likes the cultures here. ... [And] he is very open to getting a new idea”. From Caroline’s and Rose’s descriptions, family members’ open-mindedness appeared to be one of the reasons why they felt well integrated into the new society, no matter the differences of each family’s composition.

Back to the set of picture books, in terms of immigrant family components, none from the set of picture books covered settings that contained separated immigrant families. However, two picture books have immigration patterns: *Families around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014) and *Malaika’s Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016). The family representing a Canadian immigrant family contained a girl named *Ming Chieh*, who immigrated from China. Ming lives in a family of four, where she has a brother. Ming as a representative of Canadian children challenges a stereotype that Canadian people are usually Caucasian. In this immigrant family, the journey of living in Canada is narrated with a positive attitude, skirting around problems they faced. Readers can sense between the lines open-mindedness from Ming. For example, Ming states “My brother and I had to learn English fast, to help our parents. Now we speak Mandarin to relatives in China but make jokes in English at home and eat lasagna with chopsticks” (Ruurs, 2014, p. 8). The next section of narrative is Ming’s life in school, which involves having lunch with her classmates, depicting a positive social setting for this young immigrant. Rose and Caroline both stressed that socially fitting into a new environment was hard for them in their transition. It is possible, however, that providing positive images in picture books, without any strategies to unpack them, might cause distress to readers who are themselves in negative situations. Because this can contribute a “failure” ideology towards children who are encountering social challenges, response strategies are keenly important. “Failure” ideology might lead children to imagine how only they themselves have failed to overcome problems in their social network over which others have triumphed.

*Malaika’s Costume* (Hohn, Luxbacher, 2016) is a picture book delivering the story of a family splitting up. Malaika’s mother migrated to Canada for a better job with higher salary,

while Malaika and her grandparent remained in their home country. Although the situation does not correspond to immigrant children's situation in Canada, this may describe a shared experience of a divided family. This story thus offers good material for Canadian teachers and students to support understanding of some immigrant children's previous years in their home country.

Today, families presented in picture books appear in diverse forms, challenging readers' images of family. For example, *Mom and Mum Are Getting Married* (Settingington, Priestley, 2004) was a picture book delivering a story of same-sex marriage. Previously a forbidden topic, same-sex families now can be presented in contemporary picture books. While the SCWBI book set did not demonstrate this type of diversity, it may be that it wasn't particularly representative of books in Canada as a whole. With further innovation in contemporary picture books, in terms of the diverse forms of immigrant families, it is anticipated that Canadian picture books will show immigrant families of different compositions.

In summary, as stated in Chapter Four, themes related to family and Canadian culture may be useful for immigrant children to acquire the knowledge of Canadian culture. However, patterns and themes on family about immigrants' experiences may also be beneficial in developing understanding and empathy towards immigrants in Canada.

### **The Role of Picture Books**

The role of picture books in assisting immigrants culturally and socially was not highlighted by any of the three interviewees. David assumed he was too mature to read picture books, a resource only utilized in his English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to improve his academic English. Rose acknowledged that picture books appeared as important material in her ESL classes as well. Only Caroline reported reading picture books independently, and indicated enjoying a few picture books on the topic of dog training in order to acquire some knowledge of dogs. All three participants may have benefited in English improvement from reading picture books, however, they did not report any cultural knowledge learned from these picture books.

From their experiences in terms of picture books, these books appear to be a hidden resource in acquiring Canadian cultural information, unrecognized by the participants. As stories in many Canadian picture books were set in a Canadian context, readers may potentially access Canadian culture while reading the books. Therefore, Canadian picture books might help young



immigrants with cultural knowledge acquisition in minimal or invisible ways unless this is supported by teachers or other adults.

### **Social Challenges**

In addition to themes on family, another theme emerging from this study involved critical social challenges that immigrant children encountered during their transition. David experienced being bullied in his first two early years in elementary school. Caroline felt that her classmates in Regina were less friendly than people in the larger city of Calgary. Rose had a serious problem fitting into her elementary classroom, and reflected that she was the only Chinese child and new in that environment. After entering high school, Rose immediately immersed herself in friendships only with Chinese students and referred in the interview to these Chinese people as her social comfort zone. Beginning in her last two years of high school, she gradually stepped out of this social cocoon and made friends with people who had Canadian backgrounds. From these three participants' stories, it appears that they all encountered social challenges. However, it is important to stress the impact of cultural knowledge, already connected by previous research to immigrants' degree of social challenges (Sano, 2009). In addition, Bourdieu's theory is well applied to immigrant experiences and integration into a society, from cultural and social perspectives (Broomes, 2013; Gupta, 2013; Hagan, 1993).

The details from Rose's experiences, examined through a lens of theory presented by Bourdieu (1984; 1986), encourage a consideration of *different forms of capital* in light of Rose's social understandings. Caroline and David recalled that acquiring cultural capital was a time-consuming process, lasting for a few years, while Rose believed that the cultural challenges lasted about three months. It is quite possible that real cultural acquisition for Rose actually took several years to complete.

From Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) perspective, cultural capital refers to the cultural knowledge with which a person becomes equipped and which can be transferred to social capital, defined as network with people. In Rose's situation, the social capital for her in her transition period can be conceived as the network with Canadian classmates. The time Rose spent in her elementary school was also the first few years she spent in Canada. Despite Rose's self-described open-mindedness, Canadian culture was still new to her. From her reflection, "I was basically the only Chinese there. So it's kind of like I [did] not really have choice of who I hang

out with. I ha[d] to hang out with the school of people, that I ha[d] no knowledge of or I would be a little comfortable hanging out with”. From this response, it appears that the social challenges Rose faced involved lacking knowledge of the ways to interact with Canadian people. The years in elementary school were described as less than pleasant. While living in a Canadian context, Rose was definitely learning Canadian culture every day. However, her Canadian cultural knowledge did not afford a smooth integration into the local environment and making friends with people. After heading into high school, Rose quickly became immersed into a Chinese social group. Interpreted through the knowledge of *different forms of capital*, Rose’s Chinese cultural knowledge transformed into her social capital to interact with students with Chinese background, which was conceived as her social comfort zone. In Grades 11 and 12, she had the confidence to interact with Canadian people and to make friends with them. Thus, over five years, Rose acquired sufficient Canadian cultural knowledge to help her smoothly interact with local students. It can be interpreted that Canadian cultural capital was transformed into social capital through her interactions with Canadian people. As Rose recalled, she expanded her social network and successfully made friends with Canadian students.

From Rose’s history of integrating into a Canadian social context, the important of cultural capital was highlighted by my analysis. Although she herself stated that personality was the reason for her less successful elementary years, Rose may have overlooked the crucial influence of cultural knowledge to her social network. As a result, it is important to stress the impact of learning cultural information for immigrants as a way for them to overcome social difficulties; such practices turn attention away from personal flaws, such as personality, and into more universal and positive strategies for successful inclusion in Canadian social networks.

### **Canadian National Identity**

From the interviews all three participants recalled that Canadian national identity took years to be formed. After several years in living in Canada, Caroline was able to compare her thinking style and general perspectives of the Chinese. Not only did she realize a difference, but her mother in China referred to her as “a traitor to Chinese culture”. It was a milestone for her to realize the existence of her Canadian national identity. Rose was addressed by her mother during later high school years as “Canadian”. More specifically, her mother pointed out that she was

thinking as a Canadian, acting like a Canadian, eating like a Canadian. At that point, Rose was shocked to see a Canadian national identity in her body.

In their recollection, national identity aligned with culture. With acquiring Canadian culture to a certain level, they and other people were aware of changing behaviours and perspectives. Even though David, Caroline, and Rose felt they are more Chinese compared with others living in Canada, they distinguished themselves from Chinese people living in China. From my perspective, “the sense of being Chinese” can be conceived as the unique part in their Canadian national identity.

In summary, it is important to highlight the impact of cultural knowledge in forming people’s national identity. With having sufficient Canadian cultural information, immigrants can perhaps sense their Canadian national identity through their daily behaviours as well as their thinking perspectives.

### **Discussion of Patterns and Themes in the Set of Picture Books**

The interview analysis provided a catalogue for examining the set of picture books. The list of patterns of themes were divided into three groups: (a) visual information, (b) textual themes on cultural aspects, and (c) textual themes on social perspective. Illustrations conveying cultural information were shown in 19 out of 24 picture books. In Chapter Four, describing the analysis of the picture books, textual themes on cultural aspects were presented, indicating that more picture books appeared related to Canadian culture than on newcomers and social perspective. In the section that follows, I have divided the discussion of the picture book set into three perspectives: (a) discussion related to visual information in picture books; (b) discussion related to multiculturalism; and (c) discussion related to textual themes on social perspective.

### **Discussion Related to Visual Information in Picture Books**

Visual information in picture books is commonly conceived as relating to visual literacy, which is another form of literacy required for picture books (Nodelman, 1991). Scholars exploring visual literacy in picture books related to cultural aspects have examined the relationship between cultural assumptions and subsequent understanding of images (Nodelman, 1988). Specifically, people’s understanding towards certain symbols shown in illustrations is based on their cultures (Nodelman, 1988). In picture books, “all the codes of recognition flow through the image just as they do throughout the social milieu” (Bryson, 1983, p. 139). Experts

in children's literature have connected cultural knowledge in examining and understanding the images in illustrations, where cultural information appears as a medium to understand the book images. However, in this research, I analyzed the visual information shown in the set of picture books from another perspective to connect with cultural aspects, which suggests illustrations as a medium for readers to acquire cultural knowledge.

As immigrant readers may often be ESL learners, visual information in picture books is a great source to support understanding and fluent interpretation of story and theme. Pictures, in this case, are not only helping ESL readers have better understanding of the textual information (Nodelman, 1991), but also convey additional cultural information beyond the text. Images can also be considered as the most direct way of navigating cultural shocks, a term used by the participants in describing their sense of surprise at different cultural practices, and cultural information for readers. Meanwhile, for Canadian readers, pictures in picture books may also be a crucial medium through which to learn multicultural understandings.

Several types of illustrations in the picture book set, in terms of cultural learning, appeared in this study. In particular, these illustrations focused on certain geographic information, including nature landscapes, cities, and suburbs. The illustrations also included objects different from readers' home cultures. With respect to geographic information, for example, *West Coast Wild: A Nature Alphabet* (Hodge, Reczuch, 2015) is a picture book which aims to introduce the Canadian west coast landscape and cultures to readers. *A Picnic at the Lighthouse* (North, Keating, 2016) utilizes a lighthouse as a landmark in the story, which is a symbol of coasts in Canada and beyond.

Other picture books have their stories set in a Canadian or western context, with nature, urban, or rural scenes in the illustrations. *Mae and the Moon* (Gigot, Gigot, 2015) has a western city as background, with houses and yards depicted in western architectural style. Asian landscapes are different from western landscapes, in both nature and architecture. For this reason, geographic information can offer cultural knowledge for immigrant students.

Still other picture books set the stories in different cultural contexts, such as *In a Cloud of Dust* (Fullerton, Denies, 2015), where the focus is on rural Africa. *Hala's Window* (Mirza, Mhasane, 2015) illustrates scenes in the Middle East, while *Peach Girl* (Nakamura, Bender,

2014) delivers Japanese images to readers. These picture books contain multicultural information that may assist Canadian readers to develop familiarity with immigrant backgrounds.

In regard to little objects illustrating differences from readers' home culture, for example, *Gabby Wonder Girl* (Grant, *Dolby*, 2016) contains an "Aboriginal medicine wheel" (Joseph, 2013) appearing on the boy's shirt, without any textual information. The Aboriginal medicine wheel is designed uniquely apart from other cultural logos. Immigrant readers may have curiosity towards this object, which they would not have encountered in their home cultures.

Many picture books in the set have little objects in the illustrations conveying cultural information. Another example was in *Hala's Window* (Mirza, *Mhasane*, 2015) where on page seven, a goat is lying under a tree on the street. This can be conceived as a cultural feature in the Middle East, which cannot easily be found in Canada or in Asia.

In this research, I conceived picture books as a means for immigrant readers and Canadian students to acquire new cultural knowledge. The use of literature was a way for readers to have reflection of themselves and understanding of others (Langer, 1995). Not only to immigrant readers, but also to Canadian students, reading picture books can connect them to the globe through building cultural awareness. In Burke's (2013) research, it showed that the art of picture books can "help build tolerance, respect, and a greater curiosity about others who live in our world" (p. 137). Sipes (2007) stated that:

As children embrace or resist texts through language and a variety of artistic modes they are forging links between literature and their own lives. Such links have the potential to be both informative and transformative for their developing sense of themselves as individuals and members of society. (p. 34)

The concept of culture, referred to by Au (1993) and Heath (1983), can be understood as the ways we interact with the world, including "knowing, beliefs, values, and thinking" (Burke, 2013, p. 138). From my understanding, illustration can be utilized to support a story stated in words to present more cultural details. For example, the story in *Mae and the moon* (Gigot, 2015) can be that the girl, Mae, plays with and chases a moon in any cultural setting. However, the illustrations provided in this picture book indicate a western city landscape, which produces a specific cultural setting for the story. For this reason, I highlighted the importance of illustrations

in picture books related to how much new cultural information they deliver to readers, especially readers from another cultural background.

In terms of visual information connecting to cultural aspects, a message for teachers involves guiding young readers towards analyzing the illustrations. Young readers reading by themselves may miss some information. In this case, guides from teachers are valuable for them to acquire as much cultural information as the book provided.

### **Discussion Related to Multiculturalism**

While it has been common to combine discussions of Aboriginal culture with multiculturalism, I follow St. Denis (2011) in a subscription of Aboriginal culture as part of Canadian culture. From St. Denis's (2011) understandings of Canadian history, official multiculturalism "in Canada ... was a political strategy that was introduced as a way to address contesting language, cultural, and land claims with nation, it has since been widely explained, defended, and critiqued" (p. 307). As conceiving multiculturalism as a way to marginalize Aboriginal people and racialized immigrants, St. Denis (2011) regarded the term "multiculturalism" as political, which can ignore, minimize and erase the history of colonization of Aboriginal people. Throughout my research results, it appears that the concept of Aboriginal culture belongs to Canadian culture. Rose said "[Aboriginal peoples] ... just more like how Chinese has different clans, minority, *Shao Shu Min Zu* [ethnic minorities] as well. But everybody is like, they are minorities within Chinese culture, but it is the same thing happening in Canada as well. I think it is good for not only newcomers, but like everybody to realize that minorities do exist in this country, not everybody is alike". From Rose's understanding, Aboriginal peoples in Canada were equals to ethnic minorities in China, each of whom were part of the country. Rose also confessed that she is living on a treaty land, where the land belongs to Aboriginal people. As well, from my perspective, the belonging of Aboriginal culture to Canadian culture appeared in the section of the content analysis of the set of picture books. For example, *The Old Ways* (Chapman, *Mantha*, 2014) illustrates Inuit people living in Nunavut, a territory of Canada. From both the interviews and the picture books, it presented that Aboriginal cultures should be conceived as part of Canadian culture, instead being divided into multiculturalism.

### **Discussion Related to Textual Themes on Social Perspective**

In terms of textual themes on social perspective, five picture books contain a theme on being helpful to others, four on being brave and confident, three on open mindedness, two on being yourself, one on being welcoming and lenient, and another one on dealing with victimization. Readers may be able to discover these themes related to transition challenges; however, none of these themes were in the setting of immigration, which may not directly help immigrant readers get hints for their difficulties. Meanwhile, due to no setting related to immigration, it may be difficult for Canadian children to learn and understand immigrants' situations and what they are struggling with. Another three themes, related to social aspects concluded from real transition experiences, do not have reflections in the set of picture books: dealing with being lonely; expanding of social comfort zone; and strategies of socially fitting into a new environment. All three interviewees experienced great challenges in terms of social aspect. How to integrate into a new society was a crucial topic for them, and this did not appear in the picture book content at all.

From the section of content analysis on themes related to social perspective, fewer themes on social perspective, compared with themes on cultural aspects, are presented in the set of picture books. In this case, a recurring theme is the need for picture books to focus on the social challenges of immigration.

### **Discussion Related to Radical Change**

Type Two and Type Three of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) both appeared in the set of picture books. *Previously unheard voices* appeared to be the most significant Radical Change Type Two represented, and is shown in 10 of the picture books. The cultural aspects in 10 of the picture books can be conceived as *previously unheard voices*, involving Canadian regional culture, Aboriginal culture, and multiple cultures other than Canadian culture. According to Dresang's (1999) perspective on examples of previously unheard voices, "multicultural literature, referring to the cultures of people of color living in the United States, has brought previously unheard voices to literature for youth. ... [T]he numbers have increased far more substantially during the 1990s than in previous decades" (p. 25).

Approximately half of the sample of picture books in this study set conveyed in some way an aspect of multiculturalism. A question arising from this involves the idea that what was

once radical change will, at some point, shift into common practice, in favour of other more radical contents. Should multiculturalism still be attributed as *previously unheard voices* in Canadian picture books?

Growth in the quantity of books with a multicultural outlook is important. Today, the examination of *previously unheard voices* must go beyond the vague image of multiculturalism, such as people in various ethnicities showing through illustrations, to genuine multicultural literature with profound reflections on culture or cultural knowledge.

Many characters in the set of picture books, who are from multicultural backgrounds, represent Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) Type Three, especially *subjects previously forbidden*, and *settings previously overlooked*. Along with more people immigrating to Canada in current times, Canadian people may be more familiar with multiculturalism as a common practice. As Dresang (1999) claims, “although some barrier-breaking books are greeted with surprise and bewilderment when they are first published, most are soon accepted as a natural part of the literary landscape.” (p. 184). In this case, I am wondering whether we need to reconsider what belongs to both *subjects previously forbidden*, and *settings previously overlooked* in today’s Canadian context, in light of what is truly “radical” in contemporary children’s literature?

In addition, I was surprised that no picture books in the set included people with physical or mental health challenges. Referring to Dresang’s (1999) perspective, “literature for youth about a marginalized group, such as children with mental challenges, typically goes through developmental stages” (p. 134). For this reason, themes on physical and mental health challenges might still be unheard voices and settings overlooked. However, from my perspective, these themes can deliver aspects of cultural difference to immigrant students. From personal observation of both China and Canada, Canada appears to be more inclusive of people with physical or mental challenges than China. In daily life, people in China rarely see people with physical difficulties in public areas; however, it is much different in Canada. Also, in terms of mental challenges, in China it has been considered shameful for people to admit to mental health challenges, while these kinds of health challenges appear to be more acceptable in Canada. Based on my personal observations, themes on physical or mental challenges can be a great avenue through which to present cultural difference to readers. Moreover, “collectively these books allow young people to experience a wide variety of mental and physical challenges, to



draw conclusions of their own, and to begin to comprehend the diversity that exists among previously marginalized people” (Dresang, 1999, p. 135).

### **Implications of this Research**

A number of implications of this research are proposed, including the key topics below: (a) application of picture books in Canadian classrooms; and (b) suggestions of picture books corresponding to specific themes.

### **Application of Picture Books in Canadian Classrooms**

With the results stated in Chapter Four, further research is suggested relating to the application of picture books in today’s classrooms. Specific work in multicultural classrooms is recommended in order to examine the impact of particular picture books on student multicultural knowledge and perspectives. Further, teacher guidance and strategy teaching is an important area of exploration, identifying an optimum context through which picture book resources may provide maximum cultural understandings and student response.

As much visual information conveying cultural knowledge can be overlooked through reading, guides to particular picture books can play a crucial role for acquisition. In addition, for cultures with which we are not familiar, additional sections to provide background for readers can be helpful, as one participant noted. A suggested way to guide readers to deepening understandings of themselves and others might be observed in practice, where students are asked questions about the following: (a) any differences in illustrations you have observed which contrast Canadian culture and your home cultures; (b) any objects in illustrations you have found which only exist in Canada; (c) any stereotypes you have observed through the text and the images; and (d) any additional information you know about the cultures or about anything related to the story or illustrations that you would like to share with others. Through these four types of questions, it would be interesting to see whether teachers can develop students’ critical thinking on stereotypes regarding cultural image. In addition, it would be interesting to examine whether questions such as these might break the ice between newcomer students and Canadian students, increasing communication through personal stories. While some research has taken place already in this regard (Katz, 2016), there is certainly room for further study.

In addition, teachers in Canadian classrooms may wish to follow the class activities, which can be found in some picture books. Two sections in the book, *Families around the World*

(Ruurs, Gordon, 2014), are called *Your Family* and *A Note for Parents and Teachers*. These provide instructions for students to introduce their own families as well as for teachers and parents to utilize this book to create engagement for children.

### **Suggestions of Picture Books Corresponding to Specific Themes**

Arising from this study, particular books from the study set seem particularly connected to the lives of particular participants. These types of connections are examples of how books might be connected to students, when a teacher is aware of potential books in the field as well as student background. Based on the different situations of the three interviewees, I am listing as examples the books that seem most pertinent, along with a rationale for these titles. The recommended picture books may also apply to any immigrant students who have similar transition experiences as the interview participants, and thus this section may have a practical as well as a demonstrative purpose.

**David.** As David was more mature in literacy, in his recollection, picture books containing more complicated stories may have been most suitable for him during his transition time. In addition, picture books related to themes of dealing with victimization might have helped him overcome the difficulties of being bullied. In David's case, the following picture books are recommended:

1. *Worms for Breakfast: How to Feed a Zoo* (Becker, Boake, 2016)
2. *Driftwood Dragons and Other Seaside Poems* (Brown, Thiebaut-Heikalo, 2012)
3. *Families Around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014)

The first picture book is a non-fiction book with knowledge of animals in zoos and related nutrition facts. The second picture book is a poem collection, with Canadian cultural knowledge available from both text and illustrations about the Atlantic Ocean. This book also contains geographic knowledge of the Atlantic Ocean. The third picture book covers 14 families from different countries in the world. These people's stories are varied and illustrate features of each culture. It would be interesting to go back in time and see whether ten-year-old David would find these books pertinent to his interests. Alternately, applying them to current students immigrating to Canada might offer an informative study.

**Caroline.** Caroline moved from Calgary to Regina after the first half year in Canada. She had to overcome the social difficulties of fitting into a new environment, where her classmates

might have been less familiar with people from other ethnicities. As she said, she had to force herself to hang out with friends and attend various activities. Targeting students in Caroline's situation, I recommend the following picture books:

1. *Families Around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014)
2. *No More Beige Food* (Shirtliffe, Kügler, 2016)

These two picture books all cover multiculturalism. A section in the first picture book involving introducing your family might help readers to realize and enjoy unique aspects of themselves. After reflecting on their own family and stories, perhaps readers might feel proud of themselves and be more confident. The second picture book focuses on the theme on food. As Caroline was a fan of Asian food rather than western food, her younger self might have learned some new dishes from the book. With further research on the recipes of dishes children like, others like Caroline might be encouraged to learn more about cultural cuisine.

**Rose.** One of the severe difficulties Rose faced was integrating into a new environment and making friends with Canadian students. Picture books with direct cultural knowledge, especially on differences in interaction with people in Canadian culture, might have been most useful to her. The picture books recommended to Rose, and children similar to her, include:

1. *Families Around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014)
2. *Mae and the Moon* (Gigot, 2015)

The first story in *Families Around the World* (Ruurs, Gordon, 2014) is about a Chinese immigrant girl living in Canada. Although readers cannot see any difficulties the girl faces in her life, they may gain confidence in seeing a Chinese immigrant girl representing a child in Canada. In her elementary years, Rose needed to feel proud of being a girl from China, as she was the only Chinese person in her class. Even though it was difficult for her to make friends, she still needed to maintain confidence in herself. The second picture book shows a western girl's family life. Rose, and children like her, might get ideas about their classmates' family life from the story and illustrations. This book can offer topics students may be able to converse about with classmates.

### **My Research Journey as a Social Constructivist**

As a supporter of social constructivism, I selected this theory as the main theoretical framework for this research, matching well to the research questions. The factor of social

influence and interaction with the society is highlighted in Vygotsky's social interaction theory. "Vygotsky (1978, 1986, 1987, 1993) suggested that cognitive development depends much more on interactions with the people in the child's world and the tools that the culture provides to support thinking" (Woolfolk, 1997, p. 44). Woolfolk (1997) claimed that children assimilate new "knowledge, ideas, attitudes, and values" (p. 44) through interaction with the world. Picture books may be a main reading material for immigrant children, and can be conceived as a way for these readers to interact with the outside world. When reading picture books, readers are not only acquiring a technique in linguistics, but also are learning through social interaction within the cultural contexts in the literary world (Lytle & Schultz, 1990). Reading, Vygotsky (1978, 1986) argued, could become their tools to "think about and respond to the world" (Tracey & Morrow, 2006, p. 109).

In this research, it is posed that the set of picture books contains rich cultural information, including Canadian culture and multiculturalism. In the future application of the set of picture books for easing transition challenges, immigrant readers might encounter new knowledge as they need. This valuable product of reading the set of picture books involves cultural and social aspects of Canadian culture, which may provide immigrant readers space to "think about and respond to the [new] world" (Tracey & Morrow, 2006, p. 109), in addition to English language learning. As knowledge is socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986), two types of acquiring information can happen to readers, which are learning about knowledge and "learning 'from' knowledge" (Johnston & Shariff, 2013, p. 54). When immigrants confront new authentic knowledge about Canadian culture, they may acquire the pieces of new culture, which is learning about knowledge. However, if immigrant readers encounter new information that "threatens [their] sense of who [they] think [they] are" (Britzman, 1998, p. 118), they may criticize their present knowledge and learn from the new knowledge (Britzman, 1998). It also applies for Canadian students, when they confront any multicultural ideas that "threaten the ways the world has been perceived" (Britzman, 1998). In further implications regarding the set of picture books, these two types of learning both belong to social constructivism, where knowledge is constructed through the reading of picture books.

From the findings of this research, the set of picture books matched a great variety of topics concluded through real immigrant transition experience, including *visual information*

*conveying cultural knowledge, textual themes on cultural aspects, and textual themes on social aspects.* As a social constructivist, I advocate picture books as a means for immigrant children to learn about Canada and a means for Canadian people to support newcomers, and suggest that further research is important to explore these notions.

### **My Research Journey as a Critical Literacy Advocate**

Critical literacy was one of the theoretical frameworks in this research and it supported the critical interpretations of the set of picture books. As Bloome and Talwalker (1997) argued, critical perspective in literacy learning can focus on criticizing how literature has highlighted certain cultural and social ideologies, while marginalizing minority cultures. Freire (1983), in an early call for critical literacy, argued that literature is a way for readers to see and interpret the world in which they live. A critical literacy approach employed in this research provided me a lens to evaluate the set of picture books. This evaluation took place from my dual perspectives: as a person who experienced a transition to Canada as well as a person who has been living in Canada for more than two and a half years.

I explored the set of picture books conscious of cultural stereotypes, which was a theme emerging from Caroline's interview data. Caroline brought up the concept of stereotype in the section of *opinions towards sample picture books shown in the interviews*, and questioned generalization of cultures within each province of Canada, as well as Aboriginal cultures. When talking about the illustrations of people's lives in each province in the picture book, *Ride the Big Machines Across Canada* (Mok, 2015), Caroline said: "I am sure there is like more to life than Yukon and with the northwest territories than ice fishing. Also, she admitted "A lot of what we know about Aboriginal culture is stereotype.... I feel like they (*Wild Eggs* and *Missing Nimama*) should be written by Aboriginal people. Aboriginal author would be better. Because they know about their cultures". In addition to Caroline, Rose expressed a similar idea about stereotyping Aboriginal peoples. Rose hoped picture books could be a tool for people to correct their opinions towards Aboriginal peoples and Indigenous cultures. From the participants, I thus learned to think critically about the picture books as I read them for this study. Through experience, I learned critical reading strategies, and I therefore advocate that others, students in schools, for example, learn to be more critical, as well.

### **My Journey as a Researcher**

As a new researcher, I will describe here areas of challenge and discovery. Within the research journey, I encountered several challenges, including narrowing the research interests down to an achievable Master's level research topic and recruiting interview participants during the section of collecting data.

First, narrowing the research interests down to an achievable Master's level research topic was the initial difficulty in starting the research. As I was interested in two topics, picture books in children's literature and globalization as a trend in today's world, I began to wonder about combining these two topics together. I went to the field of nationalism and national identity, which was discussed in the book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Anderson, 1983). I was intending to explore how nationalism and national identity appeared in picture books. However, it was too vague and yet too broad a topic for me, a Master's student, without any knowledge in political studies. With the help of my supervisor, I narrowed down the topic of globalization to the specific phenomena I was interested in, looking at immigration. As it became apparent to me that picture books were often conceived as ESL materials to improve children's language and literacy level, I began wondering whether picture books might help immigrant children in other ways. With this broad idea in mind, I casually talked with people, who were immigrants, about their experiences utilizing picture books in their transition period. These talks helped me to form my research topic in more detail, which finally addressed whether contemporary Canadian picture books might be envisioned as culturally and socially supportive to immigrant children.

Another severe challenge I encountered involved recruiting participants for semi-structured interviews. The required number of interviewees was three, and although I began with one friend in mind, knowing that this friend had many other immigrant friends through which a snowball sampling method could be effective (Hays & Singh, 2012), I was surprised that the results were not quick and easy due to an age restriction I had placed on my participants. However, after several weeks, I coincidentally met the second participant, Caroline, during a Saturday's recreational badminton on campus. At the same venue, several days later, I encountered Rose, the third interviewee. To reflect back on the experience of recruiting participants, I seemed to have little control in this process. Although I had general knowledge of

the first participant's social network, the required age range of 9-11 was a strict rule that increased difficulties in finding another two participants. Rather than referring the recruitment method to the snowballing sample method (Hays & Singh, 2012), the word "sledding" (Brenna, 2017, personal communication) seems more suitable to describe the process. This "sledding" process can be conceived as tobogganing down a hill and collecting passengers along the way. Selecting the hill, though, is important while the time of accessing and finding participants is not controllable.

While analyzing the interview data, I realized that a follow-up interview would be good practice if I required deeper understandings related to globalization, which I did not need for this study, but which for other studies might be pertinent. A design that has ethics approval for follow-up interviews, where required, is thus recommended.

In terms of academic aspects of this study, this research journey equipped me with strong research skills that I look forward to applying in future contexts. In addition, this research strengthened my critical thinking and provided me an experience combining theories learned from books and classes to practical application. In regard to research findings, the results have broadened my thinking towards picture books and their connection to immigrants' transition experiences. I had not predicted how connected the books in the study set would be to the challenges the participants described, showing them to be a rich source of support for young readers.

### **Implications for Future Research**

After finishing my research in picture books and immigration transition challenges, many directions can be suggested for future studies.

First, the sample of picture books were selected from the 2016 summer reading list of SCBWI, which is one of the largest international professional North American organizations for writers and illustrators in children's and young adults' literature (SCBWI, n. d.). The inclusion of the picture books on the list came from the advice of their writers, who were Canadian authors as well as SCBWI members. This sample can represent a wide range of picture books created by Canadian authors. Also, this reading list contains seven picture books from 2016, five from 2015, and 6 from 2014, which means the listing relates to contemporary titles. Further research is recommended to analyze contemporary Canadian picture books on a wider scale, for example,

looking at award-winning picture books, and books selected on other criteria such as frequency of use in classrooms. My study set of contemporary Canadian picture books does not represent all of the actual books utilized in today's classroom and its size is thus a limitation of this study.

Another suggestion for future research is to design inquiry into immigrant children's responses to interview questions in order to get information about their challenges at the time these challenges are experienced. In this research, I interviewed three immigrant participants coming to Canada between age 9 to 11, who are now all living in Saskatoon. All of them have lived in a Canadian context for more than 10 years. The selection of participants may greatly influence the results, and thus further explorations on this topic are required for any more generalizable findings.

Another variable worth noting, to be changed in future studies, is the gender of the interview participants. As I have included one male participant and two female interviewees, it is possible that results with a wider population might delineate findings linked to gender. Here, the results from Caroline and Rose were similar, however the sample size is far too small to make any particular sense of this.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this is simply one study that examined the possible utilization of contemporary Canadian picture books from the perspectives of three immigrants' cultural and social challenges. Through interviewing three participants who came to Canada between the ages of 9 to 11, I discovered various difficulties they encountered during their transitions. After developing a content analysis template from their remembered experiences, the set of 24 picture books were examined through these categories as well as considered through the lens of two types of Radical Change (Dresang, 1999) as well as more generally through a critical literacy approach. Patterns and themes related to the challenges mentioned by the participants, as well as other images of Canada and Canadian perspectives, appeared strongly in this set of picture books, a surprising result in that the books themselves were not selected on the basis of diversity or any particular criteria other than being contemporary titles by Canadian authors recommended for the SCWBI Summer Reading List.

In addition to Canadian cultural knowledge contained in the set of picture books, multicultural information was also widely presented, potentially good material for Canadian



students in order to develop understanding and empathy towards their immigrant classmates. Further research, however, is required in order to explore further this possibility.

In terms of local communities, I anticipate that this research might help today's immigrant students better integrate into a new society, by providing insights to cultural and social challenges they may face in their transitional period. Regarding the global context, this research may build Canada as an even more immigrant-friendly country by helping readers to consider ideas for smoother transitions for immigrant populations. Also, this research offers intriguing results related to conceptualizing picture books as a support for immigrant children in terms of learning cultural and social perspectives. At this time, when the Canadian population is increasing rapidly, it is valuable to have insights into immigrants' transition experiences as well as resources that may potentially assist them.

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## APPENDIX A

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. When did you move to Canada?
2. Before moving to Canada, how much did you know about this country? Can you recall your first impressions of Canada? Please describe.
3. Concerning the English language, could you speak English before you came here? What was your English level?
4. What are the ways you improved your English to catch up with peers? Tell me if any picture books were important to you.
5. What length of time do you feel could be applied to what was essentially “the transition time” to integrating into Canadian society?
6. Before you came to Canada, what had you already known about Canadian culture? (e.g. Aboriginal culture, minority cultures)
7. Were you familiar with the religious practices of Canadians? (e.g. holidays such as Christmas, Easter)
8. What other differences, if any were you aware of between your home culture and Canadian culture? Did you face any difficulties from cultural differences? Any difficulties identifying with the culture and values of the new society?
9. Did you overcome these difficulties? How did you achieve that?
10. Can you discuss in more detail any other challenges you may have had (e. g. making new friends who were raised in a different culture from you, any stress in the family, any financial challenge in the early years in Canada?)
11. How did you face these challenges?
12. When did you start to consider yourself as a Canadian citizen? How did you build your Canadian identity through the early years in Canada?
13. I would appreciate any stories that offer examples of confusion you may have experienced during your transition time.
14. What advice do you have for other newcomers, if any?
15. What advice do you have for permanent residents of Canada, if any, related to newcomers?

16. These are a couple of contemporary Canadian picture books I am studying. Is it possible for you to have a look at them and tell me your response?
17. Are there any other things you'd like to say about this topic? Please feel free to share.



## APPENDIX B

### Sample Content Analysis Charts Related to Interview Results and Radical Change Characteristics

Title	Author/Illustrator	Visual Information *	Textual Themes on Cultural Aspects *	Textual Themes on Social Perspective *	Radical Change Characteristics*

#### \* Visual information

1. Illustrations conveying cultural information.

#### \* Textual Themes on cultural aspects

1. Additional background information of stories in the picture books;
2. Differences in interaction with people based on different cultural background;
3. Family;
4. Food;
5. Holidays;
6. Multiculturalism;
7. Stereotypes of people from certain cultural backgrounds.

#### \* Textual Themes on social perspective

1. Being helpful to others;
2. Being yourself;
3. Being welcoming and lenient towards newcomers;
4. Being brave and confident;
5. Dealing with being lonely;
6. Dealing with victimization;
7. Expanding of social comfort zone;
8. Open mindedness;

9. Strategies of socially fitting into a new environment.

\* Radical Change Characteristics

Type 2 Changing perspectives:

1. Multiple perspectives, visual and verbal;
2. Previously unheard voices;
3. Youth who speak for themselves.

Type 3 Changing boundaries:

1. Subjects previously forbidden;
2. Settings previously overlooked;
3. Characters portrayed in new, complex ways;
4. New types of communities;
5. Unresolved endings.

## APPENDIX C

### Bibliography of the Study Set of Canadian Picture Books in Summer 2016 Reading List of Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators

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## APPENDIX D

### Letter of Initial Contact

Department of Curriculum Studies  
University of Saskatchewan

**PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR A CASE STUDY  
IN EDUCATION ABOUT “PICTURE BOOKS AND IMMIGRATION  
CHALLENGES: AN INTERROGATION OF LITERARY CONTENT BASED  
ON A CASE STUDY OF THREE ADULT IMMIGRANTS RECALLING  
CHILDHOOD TRANSITIONS TO CANADA”**

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of  
Picture Books and Immigration Challenges: An Interrogation of Literary Content Based on a  
Case Study of Three Adult Immigrants Recalling Childhood Transitions to Canada.

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to participate in an interview with  
the researcher to answer questions related to the study.

Your participation would involve *one* session,  
which is approximately *60 minutes*.

Please note that your participation is voluntary, and if you choose not to participate  
this will not affect your study, employment or professional standings. Please feel  
free to share this poster with other possible participants, if you have time.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study,  
please contact:

**The researcher:** Yina Liu,

Email: [yil842@mail.usask.ca](mailto:yil842@mail.usask.ca)

**Supervisor:** Dr. Beverley A. Brenna,

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*(Department of Curriculum Studies- College of Education)*

**This study has been reviewed by, and received approval  
through, the Research Ethics Office, University of Saskatchewan.**



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## APPENDIX E



Department of Curriculum Studies  
College of Education  
28 Campus Drive  
University of Saskatchewan

### **Participant Consent Form**

**Project Title:** **Picture Books and Immigration Challenges: An Interrogation of Literary Content Based on a Case Study of Three Adult Immigrants Recalling Childhood Transitions to Canada**

**Researcher(s):** Yina Liu, Graduate Student, Curriculum Studies, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, e-mail: yil842@mail.usask.ca

**Supervisor:** Dr. Beverley A. Brenna, Department of Curriculum Studies, College of Education, U of S, 306-966-7563, e-mail: bev.brenna@usask.ca

### **Purpose(s) and Objective(s) of the Research:**

- Because of your background experiences, you are invited to take part in this research study that explores your recollections of the transition to Canada when you were a child. Due to limited research in this area, the researcher intends to explore the social and emotional experiences you recall. As a Master's student in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, the researcher will explore the transition experiences of three adult immigrants from China, who came to Canada between ages 9-11, through semi-structured interviews. The study will subsequently focus on what challenges these participants recollect from their transition time and eventually explore how a set of contemporary Canadian picture books match topics that are expressed.
- The overarching research question framing the semi-structured interview is: *What are the transition-time challenges recalled by three adults who immigrated to Canada during*

*grades 4-6?* The data will be presented in a Master's thesis and may be used in conference presentations, graduate student seminars and/or in journal articles.

**Procedures:**

- The researcher will conduct a semi-structured interview, taking approximately one hour, with each participant, asking about your recollections of linguistic, academic, cultural and social experiences during the transition to life in Canada. The interview will be audio-recorded and you can choose to request to have the recording device turned-off at any time.

The researcher will translate the data in English and share your work with you before writing the thesis. After your interview, and prior to the data being included in the final report, you will be given the opportunity to review the transcript of your interview, and to add, alter, or delete information from the transcripts as you see fit.

- In the thesis, the researcher will use direct quotes or paraphrase what you say using a pseudonym to support confidentiality. The interview will occur in an off campus location and will be scheduled at your convenience. The researcher will make field notes of thoughts during the interview and use a reflective journal to make notes about the themes, emerging theories, and linkages with previous studies.

**Funded by: N/A**

**Potential Risks:**

- There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research study. If one of the question areas leads to emotional or physical distress on a particular topic during the recording, the researcher will halt the interview and will make a recommendation for you to consult with Student Counselling Services or an outside counsellor. The phone number for U of S Student Counselling Services at 306-966-4920. Participation in the study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research project if you so choose.

**Potential Benefits:**

- Due to limited research examining the potential social and emotional role of picture books for the integration of young immigrants to Canada, this research will provide an important social perspective on this topic in a Canadian context. As a participant, please note that there are no direct benefits to you.

**Compensation:** No [compensation]

**Confidentiality:**

- Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a smaller group of people, some may be known to each other. It is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said. In terms of supporting anonymity and confidentiality, you will be given a pseudonym, and all identifying information (such as the name of the university, the college or department, your home city and occupation) will be removed from the written thesis.
- In the thesis, your identity will be protected through the usage of a pseudonym. To protect what you say, the data will be translated and labeled as participant #1 pseudonym, and participant #2 pseudonym etc. Only I, the researcher, and my supervisor, Bev Brenna will have access to the data, stored in a password protected file that will be on my home computer.

**Storage of Data:**

- Upon completion of the Master's Thesis, the raw data and long term data will be stored for five years in a locked storage file in a cabinet in the College of Education. When the data is no longer required after this time period, the data will be destroyed.

**Right to Withdraw:**

- Your participation in the research study is voluntary and you are free to answer only those questions that are comfortable for you.



- You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time, without explanation or penalty of any sort, until the time the data has been included for analysis in the final product.
- Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position [e.g. employment, class standing, access to services] or how you will be treated. Should you wish to withdraw before the deadline, you are able to do so; this withdrawal will not affect your academic status, if you are a student, and/or access to, or continuation of, services provided by public agencies such as the University, hospitals, social services, schools, etc. Should you withdraw from the study, your data will be deleted from the research project and destroyed.
- Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until November 30, 2016 (date at which results have been disseminated, data has been pooled, etc.). After this date, it is possible that some results have been analyzed, written up and/or presented and it will not be possible to withdraw your data.

“There are several options for you to consider if you decide to take part in this research. You can choose all, some or none of them. Please put a check mark on the corresponding line(s) that grants me your permission to:”

I grant permission to be audio taped: Yes: \_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_

The pseudonym I choose for myself is: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Follow up:**

- To obtain results from the study, the researcher will direct you to the University of Saskatchewan library location of the Master’s thesis.

### **Questions or Concerns:**

You may contact the researcher or her Supervisor using the information at the top of page 1.

- This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics’ Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a

participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office [ethics.office@usask.ca](mailto:ethics.office@usask.ca) (306) 966-2975.

- Out of town participants may call toll free (888) 966-2975.

### **SIGNED CONSENT**

- Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided; you have had an opportunity to ask questions and all your questions have been answered.
- I consent to participate in the research project.
- A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____	_____	_____
<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
_____	_____	
<i>Researcher's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>	

***A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.***

### **APPENDIX F**

#### **Data/Transcript Release Form**

#### **Picture Books and Immigration Challenges: An Interrogation of Literary Content Based on a Case Study of Three Adult Immigrants Recalling Childhood Transitions to Canada**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have reviewed the complete transcript of my personal semi-structured questionnaire in this study, and have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript as appropriate. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said in my interaction with graduate student Yina Liu. I hereby authorize the release of this transcript to Yina Liu to be used in the

manner described in the Consent Form. I have received a copy of this Data/Transcript Release Form for my own records.

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Participant /Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

## APPENDIX G

### Sample Transcript of Interview with Participants

Saturday, September 17, 2016 (face to face interview ongoing between Yina and Rose)

Yina: So how you understood the culture better. And I think this book is pretty simple.

Rose: I would say this one is very specific as well, for even culture or I guess, like important things in different provinces. It kinda includes all the provinces and just simply, I know many newcomers just know the big cities, like Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary. Let's for example like that. But they neglected a lot of the smaller ones, where I think the coast one, Newfoundland. And I think those are worth of mentioning as well, because these are part of this country. And I really like this because this is very detailed and it's from coast to coast and city to city and explain to that. I like how they including the flags. So it's very detailed. I really like this book. I suggest this book. But it mentioned nothing about aboriginal culture.

Yina: These two are about Aboriginal people and cultures.

Rose: So these two are the Aboriginal cultures one. I guess this one is more like a step-up version of it. It's good, um, it's just more like this book would be needed to be read after 11 more of understanding or heard about aboriginal culture. So like a lot of newcomers may not have lots of ideas about aboriginal culture, like me, myself, and this one too?

Yina: This one is about missing Aboriginal women.

Rose: I think it does introduce the Aboriginal. But the thing is I guess it does show the connection between, you know, people and people, in the Aboriginal culture, between people. And it does show the differences from Aboriginal people and anybody else living in this country. But I guess it's good in introducing in this way. But sometimes I found picture books for Aboriginal people is that they don't introduce anything about the history background of time, of the reason between the Canadians and the treaty people. Right? I know a lot of people, older adults, don't have an idea of okay, why all these people experiencing these benefits. They all see is benefits. Why doesn't everybody else get it? And I know through all the stuff I've heard and stuff that I guess it would be really, cuz I know adults wouldn't want to read picture books anyway.

Yina: So maybe these books are for bigger kids, when they just arrive here, like let them know about ...

Rose: It's more about introducing like the differences between different kinds of Aboriginal people. So it's just more like how Chinese has different clans, minority, *Shao Shu Min Zu*, as well, but everybody is like, they are minorities within Chinese culture, but it's the same thing happening in Canada as well. I think it's good for not only newcomers, but like everybody to realize that minorities do exist in this country, not everybody is alike.

Yina: Yeah, you are right. This's very interesting. Because not many picture books about Aboriginal that they provide the backstory. Like usually they may explain the vocabulary.

Rose: The background, it would be very beneficial if like I think the honesty really need to come out of it, where they brought out the reasons behind why are we living in this land, but treaty people have to retreat back to the reserve and everything like that. I know a lot of Aboriginal background through my co-workers and my friends who worked at the reserve as a paramedic. She explained to me and then I got to know the culture a little bit more. And I think it's helpful when somebody does understand these stuff and start to explain it to other people as well.

## APPENDIX H

### Results of Content Analysis Related to Radical Change Characteristics

Table 2

*Evidence of Radical Change Type Two Emerging in the Study Set of 24 Picture Books*

	Multiple perspectives, visual and verbal	Previously unheard voices	Youth who speak for themselves
<i>Bagels from Benny</i>	X	X	X
<i>Bringing the Outside In</i>			
<i>The Chicken Cat</i>			
<i>Driftwood Dragons: and other seaside poems</i>	X		
<i>Families Around the World</i>	X	X	X
<i>Fire Pie Trout</i>	X	X	
<i>Gabby: Wonder Girl</i>			
<i>In a Cloud of Dust</i>		X	

	Multiple perspectives, visual and verbal	Previously unheard voices	Youth who speak for themselves
<i>Mae and the Moon</i>			
<i>Malaika's Costume</i>		X	
<i>Mama's Day with Little Gray</i>			
<i>Manners are Not for Monkeys</i>	X		
<i>No More Beige Food</i>		X	X
<i>The Old Ways</i>	X	X	
<i>Peach Girl</i>	X	X	X
<i>A Picnic at the Lighthouse</i>			
<i>The Pocket Mommy</i>			

	Multiple perspectives, visual and verbal	Previously unheard voices	Youth who speak for themselves
<i>Shaping Up Summer</i>			
<i>Sky Pig</i>			
<i>Squish Rabbit</i>			
<i>West Coast Wild: A Nature Alphabet</i>		X	
<i>Worms for Breakfast: How to Feed a Zoo</i>			
<i>The Yoga Game by the Sea</i>			
<i>Hala's Window</i>		X	



Table 3

*Result of Radical Change Type Three Emerging in the Study Set of 24 Picture Books*

	Subjects previously forbidden	Settings previously overlooked	Characters portrayed in new, complex ways	New types of communities	Unresolved endings
<i>Bagels from Benny</i>	X	X			
<i>Bringing the Outside In</i>					
<i>The Chicken Cat</i>					
<i>Driftwood Dragons: and other seaside poems</i>					

	Subjects previously forbidden	Settings previously overlooked	Characters portrayed in new, complex ways	New types of communities	Unresolved endings
<i>Families</i>					
<i>Around the World</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Fire Pie Trout</i>	X	X			
<i>Gabby: Wonder Girl</i>					
<i>In a Cloud of Dust</i>	X	X			

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	Subjects previously forbidden	Settings previously overlooked	Characters portrayed in new, complex ways	New types of communities	Unresolved endings
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*Mae and the  
Moon*

<i>Malaika's Costume</i>	X	X			
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*Mama's Day  
with Little  
Gray*

*Manners are  
Not for  
Monkeys*

	Subjects previously forbidden	Settings previously overlooked	Characters portrayed in new, complex ways	New types of communities	Unresolved endings
<i>No More Beige Food</i>	X	X		X	
<i>The Old Ways</i>	X	X			
<i>Peach Girl</i>	X				
<i>A Picnic at the Lighthouse</i>					

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Subjects previously forbidden	Settings previously overlooked	Characters portrayed in new, complex ways	New types of communities	Unresolved endings
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*The Pocket*

*Mommy*

*Shaping Up*

*Summer*

*Sky Pig*

*Squish Rabbit*

	Subjects previously forbidden	Settings previously overlooked	Characters portrayed in new, complex ways	New types of communities	Unresolved endings
<i>West Coast</i>					
<i>Wild: A</i>					
<i>Nature</i>					
<i>Alphabet</i>					
<i>Worms for</i>					
<i>Breakfast:</i>					
<i>How to Feed</i>					
<i>a Zoo</i>					
<i>The Yoga</i>					
<i>Game by the</i>					
<i>Sea</i>					
<i>Hala's</i>					
<i>Window</i>	X	X			